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MARIPOSA

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BY

HENRY BAERLEIN

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TO H. S. CAMERON

My dear Hamish,

When some of us, after dining in Hall, used to climb a well-remembered staircase, past the solemn door of the omniscient historian, Lord Acton, up into your rooms, we then, I think, were wont to talk about the future much more than the present or the past. You it was who punctuated those deep speculations with infectious laughter. . . . And though you are now comparatively stricken in years—who would think it looking at the glory of your sunlit curls?—you show us, every time that you come back to Europe, that there are a great many things to laugh at. Usefully engaged in cultivating your own garden in Ceylon, you no longer devote yourself so much to the future as to the present. Mariposa does the same. I wish that she and you and I could spend a month of Sundays in your bungalow.

MARIPOSA

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I

I AM beautiful. It is what I say first of all in sitting down to tell you of my life because, as is the garlic in a well-regulated salad, that has been for me the most important fact. Thus, a number of years ago when I was one day playing with the other children in the dusty and beloved Alameda de Hércules we were interrupted by two ladies who stood watching us and talking to each other and smiling. Presently we felt that we could not continue with our game, a hopping game which always made us pleased and dirty, and as hot perhaps as was Saint Laurence on his gridiron, we could not continue if those ladies went on gazing at us. So we stopped our game, I well remember, and we moved into a group in front of them. The older one was large in every way, the younger one was thin, and clever-looking, with her glasses. They endeavoured to be nice to us, but, as they could not speak in good Castilian, what they did was principally to smile and nod their heads and give

us money. You may think that ragamuffin children anywhere are not polite, but I assure you that we did our best to thank the ladies—we made bows to them and at the same time waved our hands, as one can see the actors doing in the zarzuelas when they want to be most courteous, being for example citizens or sturdy gardeners or noblemen or wise, old mayors in the presence of a prince. As we saluted the two ladies in that fashion—out of sheer politeness, as I mentioned, and by no means for the sake of gaining still more money (though they gave us more, and we were glad to take it)—they became so happy that from smiling they proceeded now to laugh. They laughed with pleasure, showing, as we told each other, rows of larger teeth than women usually have with us.

"What are you pointing at?" the older woman asked. "You should not point."

"You have such taste. I know," the other woman said, "and you are wondering about our hats. Good children!"

Then they talked to one another in the English language, for they were from North America, and soon the younger one who was, she said, a painter, turned to me and said that there are objects of importance greater than a hat. She said that she would like to paint my picture. We have many pictures in the churches of Seville and it often happens that they show you little children, poor brown ones clothed in rags and paler ones

who float up in the clouds, since they are angels. I was considering the question.

"She will pay you well indeed," whispered one of my companions. "Say that you accept. Do not delay."

"How much shall I demand of her?" I whispered back. "She looks as if she would not haggle very much."

The painter spoke again. "Dear little girl," she said, "you need not be so shy. We will not hurt you. Come now, about the picture?"

"This lady," said the other one, "will put you into a beautiful picture. First of all she will make some sketches of you in that book she has under her arm. And while you are sitting, we will give you cake to eat and chocolates and anything you like."

As not a word was said of money I did not reply.

"Dear little one," the painter said, "you are afraid."

"Oh, no," said I, "but what shall I be on the picture?"

"Would you like," said she, "to be a little angel singing songs of adoration?"

"She really has an angel's face," the other woman said.

And still I thought about the money, for I knew that money, like a horse's breath, is very nice when you see it in the morning. Yet, as

she did not speak of it, I settled in my mind and whispered to my friends that I would let her paint a portion of the picture. Then it would be easy for me to say that she must pay me well to do the other part.

"You are too modest," said the other woman. "You think it is too great a thing to be an angel. But your modesty——"

I interrupted her. "If you like," I said, "I will take off my clothes at once and you can start to do me."

"No! no! not here!" they shouted, as I was flinging them off.

"Oh well," said I, "what do you want me to do?"

"Come up to our hotel this evening," said the painter.

And that was the first time that anyone asked me to go somewhere because I was beautiful.

. . . . . .

If you are an ugly girl in France they say of you: "She does her hair well and is fond of her mamma." I think that no one can have loved her mother more than I did, for I knew that she was the most perfect mother in the world. By this, I do not mean that she was perfect as a woman. Of her morals I refuse to speak and with regard to her instruction—by the sacred cats, why should we agitate ourselves if she did not possess a knowledge of far-distant things, which certain other people have? She was an

upright peasant and she never said that she belonged to any other class. Her own affairs, including mine, were quite enough for her, she said; let other people occupy themselves with what they pleased.

One November day—I well remember it—as we were sitting in the Jardin de las Delicias and watching how those men and boys up in the trees were plucking oranges, with which they filled so rapidly the space between their bulging upper garments and their breasts, so that it was a bag as useful as the one of kangaroos, and we were looking up into the cool, green foliage and the thousand, thousand golden balls and overhead the very splendid blueness of the sky and the great golden sun—as we were looking up at all these things and feeling very pleased, for it is then that nobody would wish to be in any other town than Seville, I remember that a friend of ours, young Miguel, who was very fond of me, and by profession an assistant of a world-famous matador, came up to us, and with his newspaper sat down upon my mother's other side.

He thought that he would gratify my mother if he read to her the contents of his paper; he was learning at that period how to read and thus he had to keep his eyes upon the print. Also with my dearest mother being corpulent he could not glance at me as much as he desired, poor soul. He was engaged in spelling out for us about a war that was to start that very day in

Asia, I believe, between two countries; and my mother, looking up into the radiant blueness of the sky, said: "Well, at any rate, they have a favourable weather for it." As he stopped and told her that the fight would be far, far away from us in Asia she rebuked him with all dignity and said that sparrows quarrelled about little bits of dirt.

Miguel, when he was young like that, was always dreaming of the time when he and I would marry and be very happy. He would rise to be a matador, he said, and he would travel all round Andalucia and other parts, with fame and money flowing in with great abundance. But my mother used to snort and say that every young assistant had those dreams. So far as she could judge, she said, it was not probable that Miguel would ever be a matador, with his own company of bull-fighters; and if he did not rise to that she would not let him marry me. She was lavish in gesture when she used to lay this down and thoroughly emphatic, like a mountain giving orders to a fragile mist; but neither Miguel nor I would raise our voices, for we knew securely that his dreams and mine would all come true.

My dear mother was a peasant, as I told you. She had come in from the countryside to Seville, she had married there, had lost my father, and had carried on his little grocer's shop. But she retained her ways which were more healthy, so

she said, than those which people have in towns. Thus one could see in Seville that the children frequently did what they chose and to their mothers they were often like the ducks upon a pond that swim outside the reach of the poor, fluttering hen which reared them. But if I was disobedient I was taken by my mother and chastised; her tongue would not be idle, for she told me with precision what she thought of my behaviour; and it may be that if she had merely spoken the hot stream of biting words they would have hurt me terribly, but what she did was at the same time to inflict upon my person very hearty blows, and thus the words were not more than a mere accompaniment. The blows which my dear mother used to give me were applied when she had laid me horizontally upon her knees. "Never, never in your life," said she, "will you be able to accuse me of not seeing to your education." I have heard that one should go on learning always and my mother certainly continued till her death—and though I was at that time a most celebrated person and much more than twenty years of age—continued with that kind of education.

I have said that I became a celebrated woman. That was when I went away from Spain and did my steps to the applause of foreigners.

I never was and I shall never be one of those mighty dancers who can speak with all their body, twisting it about and saying with it not only what

a serenader and his mandoline can sing and what the maiden through the iron bars can murmur in reply, but also what is whispered by the night around them. God in His mercy did not think it good to make me such a dancer, filled with poetry and eloquence; all that I could accomplish was to stand behind a real dancer—she had five or six of us who in a semi-circle were about her and who, like the branches of a palm-tree, moved now this way and now that way, but did not attract the audience's eye, because they had so little meaning. I was one of those. I swayed from side to side, and if on one great night a thing I will describe to you had not occurred I should be swaying still.

If you are no veritable dancer, and you want to dance in one of Seville's little places, then you may try as conscientiously as possible, you may become the mistress of the manager and of the assistant-manager and of the merchant who supplies the wine and of anybody else you like, but notwithstanding you will fail to be appointed as the dancer of the little place, that is to say the central dancer; for we Andalucians have got a high respect for art. You may become, if you desire and if you have the figure for it and sufficient grace, you may become a member of the troupe which now and then performs behind the lady of the dance. That is what I became, and what I was for several years.

Sometimes my dear mother used to put her

fingers into me and say that, owing to this comfortable life, I was enveloping myself in flesh. All things were easy for me—I had only to be at the little place one hour in the morning when the glasses and the floor were washed and then for some hours in the evening, when I did as I have told you on the stage, and all the time I was not there I went among the audience and brought them wine and smoked a little and remained in conversation, sitting on their knees perhaps and thinking very happily of my dear Miguel, my lover. If I had not been so happily in love, my mother said, then I would not have grown so plump and made her fear that I would not be able to remain among the troupe. She told me that it would be wise if I would exercise myself. At first I did not wish to do so, for we Andalucians are by nature not an active race. If there is a bad smell, we say, you'll have no nose in a hundred years. Yes, I had this inclination to allow things to remain as they are. And if it was displeasing to my mother she would punish me. But she was kind and it was always for my good. Thus if she had overheard me saying, as we do in our part of the country, "Blessed be the cleanliness of Our Lady the Virgin Mary," saying this as I turned inside out the under-garment I had worn a month, she would not have rebuked me, for there was no reason; but if she had found me lying too long in my bed and getting fat she would have smacked me on the body there and

then. So I would walk about much more than is the custom of our folk and I am glad I did so, for my body was so beautiful when that nice Englishman, John Wainwright, came, that he could look at nothing else.

We had begun at a late hour that evening, because it was so warm that people stayed away. And when at last the manager declared that we would wait no more, we only had eleven people sitting there, and three of these were persons who would not pay anything for what they drank, for two were business friends and one was Montes, the most eminent of matadors in Spain.

"You, Concha," said the manager to her who was the central dancer, "get upon the platform. It is time to start."

She was sitting with a client, a young man, and smoking in his face, because he liked it.

"Do you hear me?" asked the manager. "I said that it is opportune to start. Your friend shall see what you can do, my rose-bud."

"Oh, yes," said the young man. "Will you give us a *flamenca?*"

And what did she do? She languidly waved to and fro her paper fan—it seemed to cast a blue shade on the lower portion of her face. She waved her fan and kept her head most rigid. I can see her now, the gaslight causing her black

hair to shine as if it were the front part of the hat of one of the Guardia Civil.

I wondered who the devil was—arrogance or simply foolishness or laziness or nothing else than obstinacy—that had put itself in Concha's head.

The man at the piano had begun already and the other man on the guitar. And several of the audience strolled over to where Concha was, because it seemed to them that something was about to happen.

When the people placed themselves just there the manager determined that his orders should be executed instantly. "Will you get onto the stage?" he shouted.

"Conchita," faltered her admirer, "would it not be well?"

The devil who was in her showed no signs of going out.

"It is quite amusing," said one of the spectators. "No doubt we shall have the proper spectacle in time."

"Yes, caballero, you shall have the spectacle without delay," exclaimed the manager. "Which of you girls can do *flamencas?* You or you—?"

"Well, somehow it was I whom they were helping up onto the stage. The manager knew that I was a moderate dancer, but the other girls were even worse. And what he hoped was that when Concha saw that she was being really suspended

she would leap onto the stage. But no, it did not happen.

There I was, alone and with a feeling as of strings that pulled inside my breast. My shoes were made of lead. How could I move?

"Anda, hija! anda!" shouted someone; and I moved a little with the music. All the time I wished the Guadalquivir could be flowing over me. I was surprised that no one threw tomatoes.

But everybody knew that I was not the real dancer of the place and that I had been put there by an accident. So they refrained from telling me what their opinion was. I felt so grateful towards them that a mist came up into my eyes and, as they told me afterwards, it looked as if I smiled and wept together.

Then the music ceased and I came down into the room. Perhaps, I thought, the manager will be forbearing like the others, and will not address me in hard words and take me by the shoulders. Is it my fault that the magic of the dance is not in me?

However, he strode over to where I was sitting as he spoke. "This is Mariposa. We call her Mariposa, which is butterfly, because she is like that, like that. . . ." He made a waving movement with his fingers. "I am proud of her," he said. "Yes, sir, I understand why you should be enthusiastic."

At his side then was a little, fat man with round

eyes and spectacles. His head was bald and very hot.

"As you were saying," quoth the manager, "she is a marvel. I have always known that she would do me credit. That is why I gave her all those lessons. You are a good girl," he said to me. There was a strange look in his eyes. He evidently wanted me to understand I knew not what—he narrowed one eye, then the other—he grimaced.

The little fat one took my hand in his, and patted it.

"Of course I cannot part with her. She is immense," the manager continued. "Shall we take a glass of wine together?"

I thought a glass of wine was not enough, because we have a saying that when flatterers assemble, the devil goes to dinner.

Still we sat down at the table and the manager poured out some wine. "Dear colleague, I drink to you," he chanted.

And the little fat man lifted up his glass with an expression on his face as if he were in church.

"Ah, what a dancer we have here! She will repay me," said the manager, "for all the trouble I have taken with her."

"What is your price?" asked John Wainwright—that was his name—in his broken Spanish.

"You think that I will part with her?" cried the manager in a scandalised tone.

"Come, come," said the other, with a pleasant smile. "We are business men, you and I. Let us cut out the frills. You say you value her highly. So do I. She is," and he patted my arm, "she is very beautiful and a good dancer. And if she is willing to come with me to England I will pay you a handsome commission, and I don't think the young lady will regret it either. I am," he said, turning to me, "in the same line as this gentleman. I am out here on a sort of holiday. I would like to take you back with me. What do you say?"

"Her mother will have to be asked—you don't know her mother!" said the manager.

"Well, she can come too," said the Englishman. "Now what do you say?"

There was about him, oozing out of him, such kindliness that I was tempted very much to throw my arms around him. But a fear came over me, and so I thought it would be wiser if I drank out of his glass.

"With your permission I will drink," I said.

He was astonished, and the manager explained that I was doing this in order that his real thoughts should be revealed to me.

"Why, bless me," said the little man, "then I must have a drop from your glass too." He took it and immediately announced that everything in the garden was splendid and that I had

made my mind up. "Well, that's fine," he said —he beamed all over—"and when can I see your mother? This gentleman and I will come to terms all right. And, by the way, may I ask if the wine has reassured you about what is in my mind? Ah yes, I see it has. Well, well, my dear, let us meet to-morrow morning—you, your mother and this gentleman."

"And Miguel," I said.

"Who is Miguel?" asked Mr. Wainwright.

The manager departed, as the dancer Concha was engaged in a most noisy argument with the young man. I should not say an argument, seeing that the young man only spoke a word or two and Concha spoke uninterruptedly.

"Who is this Miguel?" asked Mr. Wainwright. "I don't know many people in Seville."

"He is my beloved—if he were here now," I said, "we could arrange the whole affair, because that lady over there, the one who is sewing," I said, "is my mother."

He looked to where the rows of mothers sat against the back wall of the room. Some of them were yawning, some were slumbering, but my dear mother was at work.

"If you like," he said, "we could go and sit beside her."

But I did not want our plans to be discussed before those other women, who would all wake up at once.

"To-morrow then," said Mr. Wainwright,

"and I'll tell you what my plans are. I shall advertise you—yes, as the most lovely woman in the world."

"Oh, thank you very much," I said.

"Don't think I don't appreciate your dancing. It is—how shall I say?—more dignified and less abandoned than that of some others I have seen in Spain."

I told him that I was not really one of the good dancers, but perhaps in time. . . .

"Oh, that's all right," he said most heartily. "We'll make a special feature of your loveliness. You'll simply have to do a step or two and smile a bit and London will be at your feet."

The music had begun again. I said I would go back onto the platform. It was necessary for me to have time to think of what the little man had said.

"And you'll have the scenery behind you there," said he, "in London. We shall paint a real Spanish scene with—but you know all that. Those bull-fight posters on your back-cloth are not very pretty, to put it mildly."

When I got onto the platform and assisted one of my companions in her dance, she asked me who that man was with the spectacles, and the round belly.

I made an appropriate remark as to the roundness she would soon be trying to conceal. I said this as I did not like to hear the little man contemptuously spoken of. I was exasperated. . . .

We were doing one of those Portuguese *fados,* but not a very obscene one. We kept close to one another and our arms were often intertwined and we continued with our angry talk.

"Anyhow, he is only a fat, little, ugly foreigner," said that woman.

I took a piece of jasmine from my hair and threw it straight at Mr. Wainwright.

CHAPTER II

VERY early in the morning Miguel arrived and joined in the discussion. Should I go to London? In the shop there was not room for all of us, my mother, Miguel and me, and so we sat outside it, on the pavement. And some friends of ours approached us and endeavoured to inform us of what they considered would be most advisable. But every time my mother with great energy replied that it was something to be settled by ourselves. Let them go, she said, and catch the swallows. If they would not march immediately she would throw an over-ripe tomato at them. Several of them were so full of kindness that they wanted to give their advice —she handled the tomatoes and they cursed her and departed.

"I have been thinking in the night," she said, "that we should give a candle to the Virgin of the Pillar. What say you? If one does not give thanks when they are due those people take revenge, perhaps."

"But if we go now to the church," I said, "and then the manager arrives here and that Englishman and find us gone, what will they do?"

"You are right," said she. "The Virgin will wait a little," and my mother crossed herself. "When I was thinking of it in the night," she said, "the Virgin of the Pillar stretched out her arms and smiled at me. But what is this?" cried my mother. "Have you looked at your dress? I swear that it has got more spots upon it than the soul of Judas. What will he say, that Englishman? It is I who have to think of everything."

While she was thus rebuking me, our priest, Don Carlos, came along. He stopped, and Miguel and I got up to offer him our chairs. As he sat down on that of Miguel he sighed and pointed to the basket on his arm. It seemed that he was forced just then to make his own purchases, because an illness had attacked his housekeeper. We all said we were very sorry.

"And I have engaged myself," my mother said, "to give a candle to the Virgin of the Pillar. I am very thankful to her. I will tell you all about it."

"You do well to give a candle," said Don Carlos, but he looked as if his thoughts were somewhere else. His green eyes glanced now here, now there; and some of his thin fingers drummed on his unshaven chin.

"I have always been very devoted to the Virgin of the Pillar," said my mother, "and now a fine piece of good fortune has descended on us."

"It has not descended on me," said the priest.

"And yet, you see, I have some bread which the baker Esteban has given me. He said it made him mournful that I should have to do this shopping. Indeed, how can I do it when I have to think so much of the eternal things?"

"You can think of both," said my mother. You, Don Carlos, are one of those whose eyes are everywhere, down on the earth and up in heaven. One of your splendid sermons—do you not remember it?—was about the olive: how the virtues, piety and charity and that, were to be found in olives. Oh, it was a sermon!"

"At that time," Don Carlos said with emphasis, "I was not under the necessity of buying olives. How do I know which are good?"

"But you told us all about them!"

"Pay attention to me, my good woman," said Don Carlos. "When a man is talking—but how can I explain it to you? You have not sufficient understanding."

She gave out a boisterous laugh—I think because she did not want it to be seen that she was angry. "Put your basket here," she said, "and you shall have some olives. And—now let me see."

"Whatever you put in," Don Carlos said, "I shall be grateful for. And I will pay what you think just."

"You will pay nothing," said my mother rising from her seat.

"You are the best of women," said Don

Carlos, "and may your Mariposa learn to be like you."

"It is about Mariposa we are occupied," my mother said, "and if you will advise us——?"

"And why not? Is not that my profession? Has it anything to do," Don Carlos said, "with this young man?"

"No! no!" And then my mother ordered me to get some articles together for Don Carlos, while she enjoyed a talk with him.

"But," I ventured——

"Away with you!" said my mother.

"A little girl," said Don Carlos, "may sometimes——"

"But I am not a little girl," I objected. "I am a woman of more than twenty years."

"A little girl," said he, smiling sweetly, "may sometimes think that the whole word is against her and she may be mistaken."

"I don't think that, if it please your worship," I said. "Only I should like to listen to all this, as it concerns me."

"I want to tell you a story," said Don Carlos. "There was a little girl in a garden and she was pulling up a root. It was a difficult one to get out, and when at last with scarlet face she succeeded, she declared that the whole world had been pulling against her."

Then I occupied myself with getting this and that together for Don Carlos. And so I could not hear everything they said. The priest was

whispering and with a serious face, but Miguel burst out with vehemence.

"They are cold—cold!" said he. "They are lumps of marble. I am not afraid, I tell you."

"They are rich," Don Carlos said. "Remember that!"

"Carajo!" cried my Miguel. "You think that Mariposa is like other girls?"

Oh, I was happy as I sped into the darkness of the back part of the shop. It would be terrible to leave my Miguel behind, but I would take his photograph and have it always with me. I would be as faithful as a shadow to the tree.

And when I caught their words again it was my mother speaking. "Oh, undoubtedly," said she, "they are most rich. We shall come back with ——" She spread her arms out. "Gold—as much as old Saint Christopher could carry on his shoulder—more than that!"

"I wish you all success," the priest said.

"You shall have unending candles," said my mother, "for the Virgin of the Pillar."

"May she protect you," said Don Carlos, "and your daughter also."

Again they spoke with their three heads together, and I coud not hear them. It was something about me—I felt as if I were a ship and soon the people in the dockyard would have finished with their tasks and I would sail out to the open sea.

"As lumps of marble, that is it," said Miguel,

quite loudly. "There is nothing to be frightened of. When she goes up into that country I shall feel as if on All Saints' Day she were in a big cemetery. That is it."

"But who knows?" said Don Carlos.

"I do! I know very well," said my beloved. "Have I not a friend, a sailor, who has been up there? He told me that a girl he was embracing let him do whatever he desired, and all the time she kept on munching apples."

"What a people!" said Don Carlos.

"If the women are like that the men will not be different," said Miguel. "This friend of mine said likewise that another woman held an evening-paper so that, lying there, she read it all the time."

"And yet, say what you will, one must admire them," said Don Carlos. "Persons that can so control themselves are fitted to control—look at their colonies. They have large colonies and everywhere, in all parts of the world."

Soon after this the manager arrived with Mr. Wainwright. Miguel came into the dark shop to fetch some chairs. I took him to the room behind the shop and we went back together. I had time to tell him fervently that he would always find me very faithful.

The discussion as to whether I should go to England did not occupy so long as many other talks of less importance. Mr. Wainwright and the manager had come to terms already. But

my mother and Don Carlos wished to have some questions answered. If the people in that land were infidels, it might, Don Carlos feared, have bad effects on us. The manager emitted a contemptuous kind of laugh.

"It pleases you to think," said Don Carlos rather heatedly, "that I am foolish."

The manager and he were looking at each other.

"Hombrecito!" said my mother. "Calm yourself, Don Carlos. It is nothing, as you know, if one man only thinks you are——" She stopped.

"What do you say?" the priest enquired.

"Well, I was going to say, with all respect, that if a single man says that one is an ass then one must look behind one, but if two men say so one must pray to God. It is a saying."

"Saying! saying! This is not the time for them," he said. "What we have got to think about is your big journey."

"Yesterday," she said, "if you had asked me about England I would have replied to you—well, nothing. But to-day I know. Young Miguel has learned about it in his school, and though it is on the other side of Paris, yet one can go there very well. When shall we go?" she said to Mr. Wainwright.

The little gentleman rubbed his hands. He told her he was glad she was so enterprising. He had been afraid that, living in so beautiful a

place as Seville, she would have thought twice about the expedition.

Now the details of the journey did not interest my mother. She announced that she had every confidence in Mr. Wainwright, and that if he wrote a document explaining what I should be paid she would ask Dr. Dalebrook if it was an honourable document. Dr. John Dalebrook, I must tell you, is a burly Englishman in Seville whom we love. He has been there twenty years perhaps, but if you see him—whether you are sick or not—you love him in a minute.

Mr. Wainwright held out his right hand, a little plump hand, with the palm towards us; but he did not speak.

"Another thing," my mother said, "is that I must find someone for this shop while I am gone. And that will be the hardest thing. It must be somebody who will not ruin it."

"We'll find you someone, have no fear," said Mr. Wainwright. He was not an impresario for nothing.

My dear mother said that after the arrangements had been duly made we could at once set out. "I know very well," she said, "that it will take us many days to get there, but I know now that the country really does exist."

"We who stay behind will pray for you," Don Carlos said.

"And I hope you will buy your groceries in this shop," said my mother.

. . . . . .

It would be tedious if I were to tell you of our preparations. Mr. Wainwright in two days had found us someone who could take charge of the shop. This was the sister of my Miguel. It was a very good idea. Then Mr. Wainwright—he was like the radiant sun and we all dancing round him—he gave in advance a little, so he said, of what I should be earning in his London theatre. I was to have a certain sum and then a bonus. It was splendid.

On the day when all this was arranged my mother smacked me. . . . We were driving by the river-side one afternoon. Up to then of course we never had a carriage, and my mother had been always very angry when she thought about the counts and countesses and marquises who drive about with every elegance but have no money for the payment of their groceries. It was very shameful, said my mother. Not that any of these individuals gave their custom to our shop—more than one reason hindered them—but on the other hand my mother was a woman in whose heart there was a big place for the wrongs of other grocers. And if it continued, so she said, it would mean the downfall not alone of many grocers, but of Spain. I do not know if she was right in holding these opinions and she never asked me what I thought of them.

I said that we were driving in a carriage, for my mother held that we had now become important peope, chosen out of all the folk of Seville by this Mr. Wainwright. There in England we would represent our country. We must be very careful as to what we did now that we had been lifted up. We were not ordinary peope any longer.

And, with some of Mr. Wainwright's money, my dear, careful mother hired a carriage with a coat-of-arms and with a coachman in a nice, blue uniform and with two shining horses. We must show ourselves in this array, my mother said. And in the hours of the *siesta* she was busy with her dressing. When she had the dress on she then washed herself, and used for that a kind of scent which was so powerful that when we drove, some hours afterwards, the personages meeting us in other vehicles sometimes put up their fans and even frowned.

"If it was only carnival," my mother said, "then I would not throw any of those imitation eggs at them, but real eggs. They have no education."

As we drove along we talked, for instance, about life.

"When you were a little girl," my mother said, "I knew that it would come to this. May God be praised!"

"If you knew," I said, "that we would go to England, why did you never tell me that?"

Two men upon a bench waved with their hands in a most friendly fashion.

"Hold yourself more haughtily," my mother whispered.

"But who are those men?" I asked.

"It is a tribute from the public. You and I—they know us. They acknowledge that—you understand—that we are not like Don Fulano, not like anybody you could pick up at the corner of the street. I should have bowed to them. I blame myself for that."

"Look there," said I. "The man there is saluting us. What shall I do?"

"As I do," said my mother. She benevolently smiled upon him and our coachman gave an agile flourish of his whip.

"Cigars and walking-sticks and flowers and hats," my mother said. "When you have dexterously killed the bull and they fling down those articles—it feels like this. My sweet Mariposa, I could kiss you." And she looked as if she could have kissed the whole of Seville.

Presently another gentleman, whom we had neither of us seen before, flipped with his fingers towards our carriage. He was in a carriage also, lying back among the cushions. And our coachman waved his whip again.

"I knew a coachman once," she said. "Well, never mind. That caballero," she went on, after she had ceremoniously bowed to him, "must be a member of some ancient house. One saw that

he is of the aristocracy." She fanned her blushes and I was so glad that she should have this satisfaction.

"After all," she said, "I shall be sorry when we are not here. I feel so strange—I feel as if I shall be leaving something of myself behind. I love them."

She was so wrapped in delight by all this homage from the unknown men that she ignored the ladies who in passing made it clear that they disliked her sort of scent or the abundance of it. On her face there was no wrinkle; she no longer entertained the wish to throw some eggs at these objectionable ladies.

"Do you see," she said, "how clever is our coachman? Very often he salutes the people just before they make their admirable salutations. Surely he is the politest person one could find."

"Who was that other coachman you were going to tell me of?" I asked.

"His name was Don Andrés and he was very clever too. In all the quarter we were proud of him. The father of another coachman was garotted on account of murder and as Don Andrés drove past him he made with his whip a little loop which, as one gazed, grew smaller, just like the garotte round someone's throat. It was a work of skill, I tell you. All the other coachmen tried to imitate him." Then my mother, speaking in a louder voice because we had

arrived now at the giant palm-tree where the carriages turn round, speaking to our coachman, she expressed her pleasure that he entered into all that was occurring with such credit. "I am glad," she said, "you do not sit there paying no attention to those people who salute."

"One is a gentleman," said he.

My mother smote herself upon the thigh. "Now listen to my words," she said. "When we come back from England we shall have a carriage. And would you not sooner be a private coachman? Would you——?"

"Thank you a thousand times," said he, "but going on like this, you meet so many folks. I have a large acquaintance. You will have noticed that." He chuckled and then made another noise, so that the horses broke into a trot again.

My mother shrugged her shoulders. "The poor man has been a little touched by God," she said. "It is a pity for a man like that."

Another gentleman approached us, he himself was driving a fine pair of horses and he put his hand up to his hat with elegance and grace.

Our coachman turned half round and: "If I were a private coachman, I would find it rather difficult," he said, "to keep my friendship up with all these folks. Ah, there's another friend of mine!" He waved his whip.

"You mean?" my mother cried, "those people you were greeting——"

"Yes, señora?" He was at a loss to know why she was so excited.

It was my fault that she did not keep her self-restraint, because I laughed. And so, not waiting for the man to turn his face away, she struck me on the cheek.

"Nevertheless," said my mother, as we were finishing that drive, "it is like this. One dances for a single man among the audience. The rest are nothing. And why should we not be satisfied if there is one man who is drawn to us in Seville?"

"There is Miguel," said I.

"You and your Miguel! But I am certain that among this population there are some who wish us well. We need not think about the others."

So she was quite mistress of herself when we arrived outside the shop, and when the friends or neighbours who were passing there the time of day made various remarks to us, she held herself with dignity. To one who said—and not addressing anyone in particular—that if a leg was beautiful it was much better if it was devoid of stocking she replied most calmly that she understood him very well. He meant that it was inadvisable for us to have a carriage.

"But who knows?" the man said.

"Little pigeon, it is easy for a common soldier," she replied, "to say how he would lead a mighty army to success."

"Ohò, have you a mighty army?" someone asked.

"It is the same thing," said my mother, passing on.

. . . . . .

I once met a man who said that everyone should be compelled by law to write one book, the book of their own life, and if they wrote the truth it would be a great book, said he. And now that I have written up to here I think of him.

He was one of those nice men—to me, at any rate, they are so sympathetic—who will talk to you without revealing clearly if they are in earnest or if they are making fun. I never knew his name, but I remember certain things he told me better far than I remember any conversation of some people whom I knew for many years.

"It is a fact that I have travelled a great deal," I said. (I met him in a foreign country).

"That is not the reason you should write," said he.

I was astonished. "If my life," I said, "had all been spent in Seville!"

"And if you tell us quite truly what occurred to you it would be perfectly invaluable."

I told him—though he knew already—that I have no learning; and he said that almost everybody had too much. They learned things out of newspapers, he said, and if you asked them what was their opinion, they either told you what they

had read or else they told you that they didn't know—they hadn't read the paper yet.

"But," said I, "supposing that a silly girl who has never read anything——"

"She could write a psychological book of great value."

"Well, I for one I haven't any notion," I said, "what a psychological book may be."

"Yet you could write one," said the man. "And I wish you would try."

He told me that I mustn't be afraid that I would write a bad book. There were so many of those, he said, that one more or less didn't matter. I must simply put down what I could remember.

"But if I do that," I protested, after I had thought it out for a little time, "if I do that it will be all mixed up."

"What else is life?" he said.

I couldn't pretend to know anything about them, about books; but still I said to him that if I shut my eyes I would remember numerous things, such as the bitter taste of an olive which I once plucked off a tree and the way that some other olive tree, as it rustled in the wind, had made me tremble and also how my mother had once made me think how she resembled an armchair, and how a stranger scowled at us when we were little children by the river and were pulling off a frog's legs. . . . I asked whether everybody else didn't have all kinds of recollections like those

and what was the use of telling other people about them?

"You will be telling them about yourself," said the man.

I thought awhile. I thought about the book we had at home and which I had so often read, *The New World of Columbus,* by the great Lope de Vega. I was always so devoted to that book that I would have read it many times even if we had possessed another book. Long pieces of it I could say by heart. One personage was called Providence and one was Christianity and one Idolatry. These two, Christianity and Idolatry, spoke with great zeal against one another at the tribunal of Providence. I told the man that that was my idea of how a book should be written. It was so exalted, so sublime.

"And so just," said the man, "because in the passage you refer to the old dramatist lets Idolatry bring forward some very good arguments, which are not easy to refute. You will recollect those lines in which he prays to God that the Spaniards and their religion should not be introduced to the New World, seeing that this religion is but a cloak, while they are spurred on merely by the gold and silver in the earth. It is a play of merit," said the man.

"And how could I write anything like that?" said I.

"When you read it were you not offended," said the man, "that Lope should have allowed

the Indians, before the Europeans came, to sing of Phœbus and Diana? I perceive that you were not offended. And I am myself incensed but very slightly. Lope de Vega happened to imagine some beautiful songs in honour of Phœbus and Diana; and if your accurate people say that they should be replaced by the Indian gods, what hinders them, I ask you, from doing so themselves? In a similar way, if your book should demand from the intelligent reader a little cooperation and if it is not a very finished work of art, then you can console yourself by recollecting that beyond intelligence is love, and if they love your book, that is sufficient."

How could I answer him? He made up his mind that I must write a book. And someone else, my Miguel, said, when I started out to write it, that he loved it.

CHAPTER III

I HAVE told you up to this about my early life in Seville and how Mr. Wainwright landed there, changing all my history. It now remains to give you an account of what came next.

He and my mother and myself set out one night for England. And of that eventful night I can remember far less about Miguel—his eyes were so pathetic—and Don Carlos, the priest, who kept on puffing out his cheeks, and the manager of that little place where Mr. Wainwright had first seen me: I remember far less about all of them, since I seemed to be already many leagues away, than I remember the night as I looked out of the window of the sleeping-car, the first sleeping-car I had ever been in, or had ever heard of. As I lay in that upper berth, I could, by twisting myself a little, gaze out into the quiet country. After all the turmoil of the station and of the whole day it was like drinking water from a stone jar to look into the peaceful night. Among the orange-groves stood here and there a tiny white house. But the only living creatures that one saw were, at long intervals, a dog; and he, worn out by the sultriness of the day, did nothing more than watch us.

The pale, straw-coloured moon, while it was showing us the small, white houses and the dogs and the red river-bank, was just as peaceful as the rest of them. One would have sworn that as it passed along the pearly sky it was asleep and dreaming. The vague expanse of grain fields was another sky, and this was being fastened to the one above by the brown garlands of our smoke.

The train stopped suddenly. It was a little station and I was admiring how the station-master held himself. Perhaps I murmured my approval; at any rate my mother, who had been awakened, saw that I was leaning over from my bed.

"Vayal!" she called out, "but you do useless things. You hunt for grasshoppers. One should be sleeping."

"It is all so strange," I said, "this night scene with the moon, the——"

"Nonsense, it is Andalucia," said she. "Now lay yourself down properly."

"But to-night," said I, "it looks so different."

"And if it were as different," she said, "as the Magnificat is from your breakfast, it is nevertheless unprofitable to spend the whole night in staring out of the window."

At breakfast the next morning she and I were at one side of a table and Mr. Wainwright at the other side. All three of us were drinking chocolate. Mr. Wainwright said his tailor would be

furious with him; this Spanish chocolate would add at least an inch to his circumference. He drank another cup.

Our train went on and on through rocky, tawny land, with very little sign of animation. Here and there you saw a stunted oak-tree or a chestnut.

"This reminds one of that Spanish island which I heard of, Ibiza," quoth Mr. Wainwright, "where murder is more prevalent, they say, than anywhere else in Spain."

"Is that so?" said my mother, rubbing her fingers round the inside of the cup to which some particles of chocolate adhered, our solid Spanish chocolate. "Where is that island now?" she asked.

"You pass it," said Mr. Wainwright, "on the voyage from the Balearics. I would have gone that way if the boats had fitted in. A man I met in Barcelona told me the Ibiza girls have five or six suitors apiece, and on Sundays and festivals every one of them has an appointed time, when the young lady receives him. Most of the people on that island live in lonely farmsteads with very little to distract them."

"And so they kill each other," said my mother. "This is some of the best chocolate I have ever tasted."

. . . . . .

Mr. Wainwright had been thinking. He said that until then he had supposed that all Anda-

lucians were lively, gay sort of people; but my mother was very well-balanced, he thought, and how did she account for it?

Up went one of her big eyebrows as she looked at him. We were still sitting at the breakfast table.

"Perhaps I'm too personal," said Mr. Wainwright, "on such a comparatively short acquaintance. But I've been wondering for a long time why you are like that."

My mother nodded meditatively. "And I," she said, "I have never wondered at all, never wondered at all." She sighed deeply.

"Of course," said Mr. Wainwright, placing his fat, little hand upon hers, "if you would sooner talk about something else, by all means let us do so. For instance, I wanted to tell you something about Venus de Milo."

"No doubt," said my mother sadly, "no doubt she is more lively than I am. And yet a long time ago, when I was being sought by this girl's father and I used to let fall little bits of red geranium on him from the window, he would always whisper up to me that I was like a bird in a cage. He said that my hands were like little birds, so lively, and that I was a little bird. He said that very often, the good man. Ah, yes, those days are very distant. But let us talk about your lady friend."

"You must have seen reproductions of her monument," said Mr. Wainwright.

"So she is dead?" asked my mother. "You know, when my husband died I had no money for a really good tombstone, and I thought that if I stole one, if I could manage that with the help of a friend or two, it would bring bad luck to my husband. But we were talking about the dead lady."

"Venus lived a long time ago," said Mr. Wainwright, "and even the monument is very old; the arms are partly broken off. You must have seen photographs of it. No? Well, never mind. There was a man who made his fortune in the middle part of North America. He built himself a palace with a marble entrance hall, and someone told him that the center of it should be furnished with a monument. 'What is the best one?' he enquired. His friend replied that the monument of Venus de Milo was the finest in the world. And so the rich man told him he might order it. But when he was informed that it was not for sale, he asked his friend to make arrangements for it to be copied. This was done, and after several months the thing arrived. When they unpacked it they discovered that the arms were incomplete, and so the rich man wrote an angry letter to the railway people, saying that he wanted damages—I think five thousand dollars—for their carelessness. He said the monument was practically useless. And the railway people in a short time sent him the money."

Meanwhile we had stopped at some small place of which the people had come down to see us—the two policemen, side by side, and persons with fresh water and some others, newly shaven, who appeared to be on holiday with nothing else to do but let themselves be seen, and several girls most decorously dressed with roses in their hair.

"The railway officials in this part of the world," said Mr. Wainwright, "are as amiable as those I told you of in America. They give us every opportunity for seeing the people."

"And it is very nice for those people to see us," said my mother. "This is not a place like Seville. We have roses all the year. Do you think it would have been a good plan if I had put up a rose-tree on my husband?"

Mr. Wainwright said that, if she would permit him, he would send a letter to that manager in Seville, ordering a seemly tombstone. At first my mother knew not how to answer, but the little man persisted, saying that it would cement our friendship.

"Oh, you are the kindest man," my mother said. "I swear that after you are dead I will not rest before you have a very handsome stone."

"Except that it is possible," said he, half smiling, "it is just possible that you may die first."

"No! no!" said she with great determination. "I will not, because you are the best of men."

At our other windows—so that the policemen on the platform should not see them—several children, boys and girls, were tapping with long sticks. And there was an old, crooked man who had a basket of strange, withered fruits upon his head. The children seemed to be afraid of him, as if he had the evil eye; but after he had passed along, growling out his unattractive wares—I wondered when he last had sold one—they returned and rattled hopefully upon the windows.

. . . . . .

The afternoon was most agreeable. When we had finished lunch, during which my mother and Mr. Wainwright lifted up their glasses very frequently to one another and were very pleased with everything, when we had finished lunch they both went off to their compartments. As the upper berth in ours was not let down I would have been compelled to lie for my *siesta* on the floor. I said, though, that as this was my first journey I would sooner die than miss what was occurring and my mother told me I could sit on one of those small seats out in the corridor.

It was a wild and sun-scorched country we were passing through. The shrubs and scanty trees among the rocks were often twisted, just as if they were endeavouring to keep away from the ferocious sun which pelted down on them out of the glittering sky. There was so little vegetation and I thought of our great, tawny Guadalquivir

and the leagues of joyous country in the plain of Seville.

"Well now," said a voice, "the poor young lady is unhappy. She thinks of her beloved Andalucia."

I turned round. Standing over me there was a Spanish gentleman of middle age. Most of the time at lunch he had been looking at me very hard. Another reason why I liked him was his cleverness. He actually knew that I was Andalucian.

How did he know, I asked.

He held up rigid his gloved fore-finger and looked mysterious. "I have a box of chocolates," said he, "in my compartment. . . ."

"Thank you very much," I said, and getting up I followed him. The back part of his hair surprised me. It was very thin.

One other person, a fine, rather tall young man, was in the corridor. I had only time to notice that his lips were beautiful, as if with saying many words of love; his chin, like all his face, was resolute; his black tie, falling splendidly, had little blue spots that were like his eyes and the brown shoes, although they were not new, were such that I would not have minded if they had passed over me. This young man watched us, but without much curiosity, I thought.

When I was in the other gentleman's compartment he excused himself that he had not a single flower. "But still," said he and bowed,

while I admired the whiteness of his teeth, "what flowers could live beside the señorita? And he sat down very close to me. I saw that he had shut the door.

He smiled at me. "So, so," he said.

"Where are the chocolates?" said I. "You told me——"

"Oh!" he cried, "I had forgotten them. Here they are." It was a large box, but one half of them had been consumed. And I must say that I had never eaten any that were of such excellence.

"Those round ones there," he said, "they are my own invention. The vessel they are made in is a little smeared with cloves. And all the breath of Zanzibar, the burning East, the magic East, is in them." His own breath, as he leaned over me, was warm upon my face.

"*Ay de me! ay de me!* but I am lonely," said the gentleman. "I am like that bird—what do you call it?"

"What bird do you mean?" said I.

He bit his under-lip and almost glared at me.

"I don't know what sort of bird you mean," I said. Till now I had not seen the many drops of perspiration under his thin hair. The afternoon was hot, but still I was astonished.

"You—you—you wonder I don't know it's name, but now I recollect," he said. "It's called the erithaco. I'm like that. Aristotle says it is

so fond of solitude that in a thicket you will only find one specimen. Believe me, my dear señorita, I am very lonely. Will you not be kind to me?"

"Why not?" I said. "I like you very much. You are a very interesting gentleman," I said.

"Ah, do you think so?" He looked very glad.

"That erithaco—I have never heard of him before," I said.

He nodded. "Put your little head just here," quoth he. He pointed to his shoulder and he started stroking me upon the face. "My love, my love," said he.

It was very nice to be with him. But why did he not want to tell me more about that funny bird? "The erithaco bird," I said, "you told me——"

"Never mind what I have told you. If you knew how much——"

"If I knew," I interrupted him—the man was strange—"I wouldn't ask you. And if you were not so nice I would be angry with you."

"God in the highest heaven!" said he, and made a groaning sound. "Can't you let the cursed erithaco go to sleep? I wish to tell you something more important, infinitely more important." And the doleful look which he had had before came back into his eyes.

"Now you seem just as if you were in yonder

thicket with the erithaco bird," said I. "You look so very sad again."

He raised his mournful eyes to the ceiling. "Will she never understand?" said he. "It is enough to bring one to insanity. Much better if we talk no more."

I never had met anyone like this. Well, if he did not wish to talk. . . . "Still there is one thing I will ask," said I. "If you are like the erithaco bird which lives alone, because it is so fond of loneliness, how comes it that your loneliness should make you sad?"

"It is enough! I go!" he said. He sprang up suddenly.

"Take care you don't upset the box of chocolates!" I cried.

"Oh, may the box go to the devil!" he exclaimed.

And as it fell onto the floor and all the splendid chocolates were scattered everywhere I gave a shriek of anguish—and the door of the compartment was burst open and that other man whom I had seen was standing there. He was as stern as possible.

"Excuse me," said the other gentleman, "but this is my compartment. It is usual to knock."

"Would you have heard me?" said the young man. He was English also and he spoke our language more or less like Mr. Wainwright. He

was on his way up, as he told me afterwards, from Gibraltar.

I did not know what to say, and therefore I stooped down to pick the chocolates up. As I was engaged in this and being on all fours, no word was uttered by the two up there. But I kept looking at their feet: those of the Englishman were motionless, the left heel of the Spaniard was tapping nervously, and when two chocolates with the motion of the train rolled underneath it they were flattened out. When I had picked up all the others and had wiped or blown the dust off and replaced them in the box, I rose and saw that that young Englishman was going on with his determined gaze. Behind him through the window one could see the bare rocks and the desolation and the pitiless blue sky—it was a very fitting background for the Englishman just then.

Very soon we were the best of friends, dear Captain Jennings and myself. He told me, while we stood out in the corridor, that any woman such as I was must be very careful.

"There are many ruffians in the world," he said. "No, really, it's not a laughing matter."

"But I'm not laughing," I assured him. "I am only smiling, just a little, and at you because you blush so nicely."

"Do I? Dear, dear! that is dreadful," he declared.

"It suits you very well," I said; and as he did

it more and more I could not keep myself from laughing.

He laughed also, and he begged me in a charming way not to continue speaking about him. Would it be indiscreet, he asked, if he were to enquire how far I might be going and if I considered it quite safe to travel by myself.

So then I told him of my mother and of Mr. Wainwright.

By repute he knew him. Mr. Wainwright was a very enterprising fellow. Were we going to take a part in one of his concerns?

I said that he would have me billed as the most lovely woman in the world.

"How stupid of me!" said the captain. "Of course I should have seen all that without you telling me."

"Mr. Wainwright, he knows best," I said, "but as I dance so badly I may not succeed at all in England. On the stage of Seville I was almost nothing."

Captain Jennings was, however, confident I would succeed. "A lovely woman—certainly in England—has got this advantage over other people," he explained. "She only has to be, while others have to do."

Then he told me what he did himself; he was an army officer, he lived near London and he hoped that he would soon be seeing me at one of Mr. Wainwright's theatres. "But I shall only

be a humble member of the audience," he said. And when I promised that I would come down from off the stage to sit beside him he informed me that it was not done in England.

I pondered over this. Should I have to be upon the stage all evening and not come down? Of course the money I was going to get was far, far more than I had ever had in Seville. "But if you cannot sit and drink with them," I said, "how can you ever meet the rich men of the audience?"

"What an extraordinary girl you are!" said Captain Jennings.

"The manager in Seville told us always," I explained to him, "that we must not regard our dancing as an end, but as a means by which a wealthy man would be attracted. So the manager said often that we ought to pay him something for the right to show ourselves. Yet, as it was, he only made us pay for breakages and perfumes and our dresses."

"I see," the captain said. "But aren't there any of you who just dance because you love it?"

He was such an amiable man and so I said, "Oh, yes, we love it, only——"

"Only what?" said he.

"The years will come when all the powder in the world will not suffice to make us beautiful and when we can no longer fold our skirts about us gracefully, as if they were a fan. It must be fearful for a woman who was a great dancer

when she makes the movements with her red-heeled shoes and leaves the audience unaffected."

"I see," he said again. "You are afraid of growing old."

"To have to go on dancing like the celebrated Lucia," I said. "She was by then a grandmother and yet she tried to make the *entrechats* up in the air—five, six of them—before she came back to the ground again. It is disgraceful for a dancer to have crimson lips."

"Why should it be?" said Captain Jennings. "Would you mind?"

I saw what I had done and I confessed I had been thinking about something else. "Poor Lucia came down so terribly," said I, "upon an orange that the women, like my mother, who were sewing by the wall, put up the sewing to their faces and the bad old men were leering at each other, and poor Lucia was prostrate for a long time on the stage and weeping. And she shook her fist at all of them and told them they were devils."

"Poor old thing," said the good captain.

It was like a flame within me, pressing forward. "She was overcome," I said, "and what by? By the years. Oh, I have often thought about it. They come on—we are besieged. We live, each one, inside a tower—the enemies are creeping on across the country—grim and silent and restless—it is the great shadow-army that

you cannot stop or turn. The shadow-army of the years. And if you fight against it your own comrades sneer at you, throw oranges. . . ."

"But," said Captain Jennings, speaking very gently, "isn't there a time when it is better to capitulate?"

Then I told him of Pizarro, the conquistador. Captain Jennings said he knew about him.

"Do you know," I said, "the only thing concerning him that I know? When he was over seventy years of age he slew with his own hands three men who came to murder him."

"Bravo! I'm sure you'd do the same. They couldn't face those flashing eyes of yours."

But I was weary. I wanted to sit down. And he remained beside me, gazing out in the direction of Madrid. I did not care when we were going to arrive. My heart was heavy.

Then I noticed on the platform of a little station, nearly opposite to me, two children, boy and girl, whose clothing was mere rags. They were sitting, hand in hand, on one of those enormous wine-barrels. They swung their naked legs about and evidently they were quite content.

As I was looking at them the small girl nudged her companion, spoke to him and smiled. He smiled, glanced furtively at us and looked away.

"They are talking about one of us," said Cap-

tain Jennings. "I wonder what the little brats are saying."

But they were so polite, those two, that when they noticed we had seen them they descended from their perch and with solemn, even anxious, faces went off to inspect our locomotive.

CHAPTER IV

MR. WAINWRIGHT had arranged that we should go straight on as far as Paris, stop there for a day or two and then proceed to London. And the captain had the same plans. He and Mr. Wainwright liked each other. I think that Mr. Wainwright told him stories of the stage. At any rate the impresario's eyes behind the big, round spectacles were twinkling always and the captain much enjoyed himself. He told me once that he would have preferred to spend more of the time with me, but I said we could have sufficient opportunity in London. He said: "Yes, of course," and in two minutes he was back with Mr. Wainwright. I had previously thought that Englishmen were very grave and rather silent people.

Nothing happened of importance either in the northern part of Spain or else in France or till we arrived in London. When I say that nothing happened I am wrong. I mean there was nothing equal to the numerous and great events in London, and I want to tell you about those at once.

Mr. Wainwright was acquainted with a good hotel in Kensington. He said that it was less resplendent than some others, but it was a peace-

ful place. He thought we would not like to have the full glare of publicity upon us all at once. His representative in London had already talked of me, and if we stayed at the Savoy, for instance, we would be considerably embarrassed. He had therefore written to the Worcestershire Hotel for three nice rooms, as he proposed to stay there too, instead of at his flat. He said that no one at the Worcestershire would be acquainted with the Spanish language; and though his own knowledge of it was so small, yet we would find it very troublesome to be without him.

Neither I nor my dear mother had the slightest fear. We left ourselves with every confidence in Mr. Wainwright's hands. If you suggest that we were rash, as we had only known him for a short time and as we were both of us so inexperienced in foreign travel, I reply that you do not know Mr. Wainwright. He told me once in fun that the Norwegians are so honest that if in Christiania in the middle of the main street you should leave a £5 note and come back in a year, not only will you find the note but interest as well. That is how Mr. Wainwright was himself.

When we reached the London station several friends of Mr. Wainwright met us, and when they were introduced they made the strangest bows both to my mother and to me. I found out afterwards that they believed this is the way the

people bend themselves in Spain. Except to Mr. Wainwright they did not say anything, those gentlemen; but one of them said "Oh" and "Ah" to us. He and the others did not look straight at me, but gave little furtive glances.

Another one of them, however, had a marvellous bouquet for me, and this appeared to give him courage. He also did not speak, but he was going to do so as he gave it me. My thoughts flew back to the small place in Seville where my dancing had been done—I wished they could have seen me at that moment, Concha and the rest of them. People hurrying about—noises everywhere and motor cars—the capital of this great country—and a gentleman presenting flowers. It was like a little, tranquil, gorgeous island in the midst of the great sea. I nodded to the gentleman and pressed his flowers to my bosom. He was on the point of speaking and, to judge from his expression, it was going to be in poetry. Oh, my dear Concha—so I thought—I will not rest until with God's help I have made you and those girls and the good manager as happy as myself. Oh, Miguel, my dearest love. . . . If this triumphant moment could have lasted—it would have to last, it seemed to me, a long time for that gentleman to say his words —but Captain Jennings said he must be getting on.

And while the friends of Mr. Wainwright hovered round about me still, I found myself

behind a counter, contemplating several custom-house officials. What fine men! So calm, so capable and kind. Nothing would have pleased me more than to have had to pay. Captain Jennings was beside me—Mr. Wainwright being with my mother—and I specially admired one stalwart man. He was not very near me and I wanted him, so I exclaimed in Spanish, *"Amigo mio!"* He paid no attention, he was looking at some other person's luggage, and I said a little louder: *"Hombrecito!"*

"Good gracious!" said Captain Jennings, "do you do that in your country?"

Just then the dear official turned toward me. So I waved my arm to him. He came at once and spoke some words.

"He is asking," said Captain Jennings, "whether you have anything to declare."

"Please let him say it again," I begged.

"But if you don't understand him?"

"I like to hear his voice," I said. "Ah, now he talks!"

"He asks if you make any declaration."

By God's body, how was I to make the declaration that I wanted to?

"Well, what am I to say?" said Captain Jennings.

I had no idea what things were dutiable.

"Have you any perfume, eau-de-cologne, any watches, opera glasses, cigarettes or photographic apparatus?" said the captain.

The benignant man was looking at my things in such a way that hyacinths and lilies should have risen out of them. He thrust his hand so softly down the side and was preparing to pass on to the next person's luggage. I would lose him and for ever—so I pulled at random something from the box and held it out to him. Already, at that rather early age, I had observed that pleasures in their flight become more beautiful. What I pulled out was a white shoe. He shook his head and was already looking at the passenger beside me. I was being driven by a cruel wind from this official. One more effort! . . . This time I brought out a garment, a chemise, and held it up aloft; but the official was indifferent.

"One doesn't pay on those things," said the captain. "Besides, they are necessities. I'll fasten up your box now; then we'll have it on a taxi. Where's your mother?"

Mr. Wainwright's friends were ushering me into a cab. My mother was there, waiting for me. Mr. Wainwright at the door was telling them how to dispose the luggage. Part of it would go with him inside another cab. He chuckled as he looked at two of our pieces; he had chuckled over them throughout the journey, and I think that—may his days be lengthened!—he will always go on chuckling. I am sorry that he cannot take them with him when he sadly mounts up to the Gate of Heaven. My mother

and myself and various friends of ours had recognised that they were not the usual sort of luggage—one of them a slop-pail made of china, blue and white, and now containing boots, a petticoat and a large bottle out of which we drank—I filled it from the pump at several stations on the way. These articles all fitted well into the slop-pail, and our other piece that was unusual consisted of a parrot-cage, in which I had, perhaps, a score of newspapers concerning bull-fights. Miguel entreated me to take them, so that I should read in them from time to time and think of him. My mother said that if I could not think of him without old newspapers, in which his humble name did not appear, it was a grievous prospect both for him and me. She remembered my dear father very well indeed, although he had been dead for nearly twenty years; she did not have to read in newspapers about the deeds of other grocers. But I told her Miguel would be unhappy if I did not do as he desired, and since she loved me she agreed that I could take them if I did not put them in our real luggage—we had each of us a box which she had purchased second-hand in Seville. That is why I put them in the parrot-cage. . . . As I mentioned, Mr. Wainwright on our journey had derived a great amount of joy from these unwonted specimens of luggage; the sleeping-car conductor had received them in a fashion that brought down upon him a rebuke.

"By the twenty thousand olive-trees of Andalucia!" he muttered.

But my mother overheard him. "You are like a mule that is in love," said she. "Why do you hold yourself like that? You talk of twenty thousand olive-trees—well, have you counted them?"

At all events he was a truthful man. "Not yet," he said, "but——"

"In the meantime," said my mother, "you can help us to put these things in their proper place."

"At the señora's service," said the man.

Now, as I write, it seems to me that I am not like this conductor, for I do not put things in their proper place.

. . . . . .

Before we left the station Captain Jennings said he hoped that we would come and spend a few days at his sister's house, as soon as it could be arranged.

"Now, look you," said my mother, as we drove away, "here we reach the big town. All is well!"

"Ah, yes," I sighed. The world was very good. There is a picture I have seen in Seville of a large, fat woman being drawn along by decorated oxen in a decorated car and she is lying there at ease—I think she is a queen—while everybody else rejoices, throwing rose leaves at her, dancing round the car and flinging up their

arms into the sunlight. And the queen rides on in perfect bliss. That is how I was feeling in the taxi.

We had stopped behind a beautiful, red omnibus.

"My dear, dear mother," I exclaimed—and kissed her hand—"I follow you in everything."

"You are my good girl," she answered, "and I only wish I had more knowledge of the world. A friar that was a soldier knows his way about."

But even if my mother never had enjoyed a great variety of circumstances I was confident that she would always be the mistress of the situation. "Please," I begged, "as we are driving will you tell me how I should comport myself?"

Without making more ado my mother started with her counsel. And if in other days I had not always looked on her with adequate respect—too much aware that she was as she was—I felt just then in such a state that every word she uttered, and before she uttered it, was like a radiant lamp, like those which glittered in the blue and silver evening on the streets of London.

"Have you noticed how that Captain Jennings is?" she said. "One speaks to him, you speak to him, and you a virgin—*Ca!* those houses! You and I, child of my soul, the day

will come—we will step into one—not one alone! Oh, victory!"

I let her meditate a little time, before reminding her that she had spoken about virgins.

"If she had not been with a man so long as it requires to boil an egg." She said this in a dreamy manner, but then suddenly remembered what we had been talking of. "I wander in my speech," she laughed. "That was an old enactment of the Moors in Spain. I meant to speak of Captain Jennings. When you are with him—I have noticed it—he is so nervous that one would suppose that it is he and not yourself who is the virgin. Can it be that this is so with all the young men of the land?"

"Perhaps he is in love with me," I said.

"Of course he is," said my mother. "But I am less certain with regard to his bashfulness, the rare atmosphere within him. Is it of the kind that one must treat with suspicion, like a nearly empty kettle on the fire?"

"He is very decorous," I said.

"Are you in love with him?" said my mother.

Now, what was I to answer her? "Everything goes by the will of God," I said.

"God is omnipotent," said she, "and money is His lieutenant. So says the saying. I wonder if this captain is a rich one?"

. . . . . .

As my mother opened the door of that taxi our friend Mr. Wainwright hurried up. His

taxi had been running just behind. Some steps led up to the door of the hotel, and over the steps there was a glass roof. I tell you about all these things because the Worcestershire Hotel was to become our home for many weeks.

Then down the steps there ran two page-boys in dark uniforms, and I believed that I would like this house. They were not roguish boys, as we had found in the hotel in Paris, where the pages often had the look of an attentive dog which begs that you will throw a pebble so that he can also have some fun. These London boys had more of the Castilian dignity, and though they gave one the impression that they rarely idled, yet on each of them there was a very well-brushed head of hair, with not the least sign of untidiness. They helped my mother out and me, and then a bulky man came down to supervise our luggage. I had scarcely time to look at him before another person, the head-porter, tumbled down the steps.

I think if we could wash out of our memory a great many things and look at them as if we had never seen them, we should get a great deal more of pleasure out of life. Don't you think we wear experience like a suit of armour, which no doubt gives adequate protection, but at the same time hinders us from rushing headlong into a grand contest, slashing out so gloriously and emerging from it as a bee intoxicated with

the sweetness of a flower it had not known? I have been sometimes in a very ordinary room with very ordinary people, but it has become for me a marvellous romance. My mother used to say that this was full of danger; she was afraid that it would lead me into many pitfalls. But would I not be sinking into deeper pitfalls if I tried to make myself as God did not intend to make me? . . . Very often, I believe, those persons are the most romantic who exist in circumstances which appear to us to be extremely dull—and what a splendid thing that this should be. But, on the other hand, I daresay those who live in a romantic situation are quite often very stolid people. As for me—if you will pardon me for talking so much of myself—I think that I am in the middle, sometimes looking at the world in this, at other times in that way.

As I stood outside the Worcestershire Hotel it really was delicious to observe this Barnfield, the hall-porter. He was much more like a merry wind than like a man. If you had come across him and not known his occupation you would have imagined he must be like one of those old troubadours and one who improvised his songs, which were, perhaps, not always very seemly songs. There was a bustling sort of gaiety about him. But, in one respect, his jovial appearance rather wronged him, for he never was at all unseemly. During thirty years he had been at

his post, ever since the opening of the Worcestershire Hotel. And all day long he scurried through the house, performing with an equal zest the dreariest of duties—such as winding up a certain clock which always stopped a few hours afterwards—and ready with an equal zest for badinage. An ordinary porter would have shown caution when he caught sight of our slop-pail and the parrot-cage; but Barnfield took them just as if they were the sort of luggage he had handled all his life.

A little old man in the hall was pacing up and down.

"Your dinner'll disagree with you, sir," Barnfield said, "if you go in as melancholy as all that."

"It's awful," said the little man—his voice was squeaky—"here's a letter I have had from Ireland. They've been auctioning some cows of mine, and I suppose the man who held the auction was a friend of some of those who came to buy the cows. At any rate he didn't try to send the price up; he didn't talk about their virtues."

"He should have talked," said Barnfield, "of their lack of virtue. Page, take these things up to 41 and 43. Those others," and he indicated Mr. Wainwright's, "go to No. 58. Now then, bustle along. This way, please, madame."

All the way up in the lift he never spoke a word, although his roving eye was brilliant and

I would have given some pesetas for his thoughts. He did not move his feet but, for some reason, he was rolling slightly to and fro. Except in tales I never had encountered any pirate but I kept on thinking that this man, with his humorous, not over-washed features, his yellowish hair that was brushed up from both sides in order to conceal, as far as possible, the baldness of the dome, and with the tangled yellow moustache—I thought that Barnfield was more like a pirate than anyone I was ever likely to meet. And Destiny had made him porter of a Kensington hotel. I cannot think of any uniform that would have suited him, and afterwards I heard that each new lady who came to the Worcestershire as manageress immediately provided Barnfield with a uniform she thought appropriate. These uniforms he steadily refused to wear.

Mr. Wainwright went up with us to our rooms. They were very nice; my mother saw at once that in her room there was an inkpot, nearly full of ink. She could not write, my poor mother, and so of course the presence of the inkpot served to make her very pleased. She looked at Barnfield in a fashion which, for one who had only just entered the hotel, was perhaps a little too familiar.

Mr. Wainwright tried to make us have our dinner in our rooms, but we of peasant stock are not so easily exhausted by a journey. And

we neither of us wished to throw away a moment in becoming more acquainted with this interesting country. You will know how we in Andalucia sing about *"salero,"* the salt-cellar. *"Viva el salero!"* we cry; and mean by that the wit, the grace and the exuberant imagination of the south. These qualities, our salt, are all contained in the *"salero."* As we came downstairs that evening my mother tried to make a new song. It was about that inkpot. *"Viva el tintero!"* said she. *"Viva el tintero!"* She could not at the moment think of any other words to say; so she repeated once again and this time in a louder, more emphatic voice *"Viva el tintero!"*

I was a step or two in front of her and, turning round, I waved a finger in the air, to make her stop.

"I feel as happy as a smuggler!" she exclaimed.

"Remember where we are," I pleaded.

Several people in the hall were looking at us as we came down the last flight of stairs. My mother's voice was very audible and she, of course, was talking Spanish. But, to make it worse, she sang again and quite defiantly of the *"tintero."*

"If you do not know a song," I said, "the best that you can do is not to sing it."

"Do you think so? Well!" she cried, "have that! And that!" and bending forward she in-

flicted on me two sharp blows. While I acknowledge that they fell upon the place that partly was designed for such a purpose, yet with all those English people looking on, it was a most unfortunate beginning of our stay at the hotel.

. . . . . .

"Now then," said my mother, as we took our seats at a small table with Mr. Wainwright sitting between us, "I feel," said my mother, "as if I could consume a capon eight months old. I am in love with this town."

"Wait until you see more of it," said Mr. Wainwright. "I hope that when you do——"

"I am ready! Let us go to-night, and where you will."

But Mr. Wainwright had not the same eagerness. "Well," said he, "we can see after dinner. I hope you will like this soup."

"I feel," said my mother, as she quickly swallowed it, "I feel as if I had stolen someone else's stomach. And you, my love?" She had forgotten—so had I, almost—our little altercation coming down the stairs.

"I am not quite as hungry as that," I answered. "But nevertheless——"

"And I can't be sure that you'll get one of those capons," said Mr. Wainwright. "In fact it may take you some time to get accustomed to our English food."

"Hombrecito!" said my mother, beaming at

him. "Do not make yourself bad blood about it. If my stomach——"

"Excuse me," interrupted Mr. Wainwright, "but would you mind very much if I ask you not to use that word? It is practically the same word in our language, and—don't think us foolish—but we never talk about it."

My mother gazed at him. "But in this room," she said, "surely in this room——"

"More especially in here," said Mr. Wainwright, "we don't mention it." He lowered his voice and, making himself look as if he had just seen a ghost jump over a wall, he said that if we were overheard talking about that part of the body there might be complaints made in the office and we might be asked to leave the house.

"God preserve us," said my mother.

"I daresay that in your country," said he, "there are other things one doesn't talk about."

"Well, I don't know them," said my mother.

"What about the Spanish Queens?" said Mr. Wainwright. "Someone told me they are not supposed to have any legs. At all events it isn't etiquette to allude to them."

"How strange are people!" said my mother. "Why should they want to address the Queen or anybody else on such a subject?"

While I had been listening to their conversation I had glanced about the room. Most of the people who were sitting at the other little tables were sedate and elderly. The small white

man who had lamented concerning the fashion in which his cows were auctioned, had his wife beside him and it was extraordinary that she had the eyes of a disdainful cow. She felt that I was staring at her and her crimson hat; so she endeavoured to annihilate me, to look absolutely through me. Underneath the hat this woman of the cows had pieces of her face on which the colouring was nearly crimson; we have Sunday newspapers like that in Seville, with the pictures not well made, the colours flowing over where they should not.

"Eat your fish," my mother said.

That woman of the cows was now declining very haughtily to look at me. She had engaged the lady at the table next to her in conversation. And the little man, her patient husband, went on with his eating.

"Take your fish, I tell you," said my mother.

Mr. Wainwright murmured something and my mother resolutely said that she would not allow it.

"What are you talking of?" said I, as I left off regarding those two people.

"Vaya!" quoth my mother, "you would slay the King and run away to Murcia. Am I not your friend?"

"But may I ask," said Mr. Wainwright, "what you mean by saying that about the King? I don't understand in the least."

"It means that she is disobedient," said my

mother. "If she doesn't eat how will she keep her beauty?"

"You look after her very well," said Mr. Wainwright, "but perhaps she doesn't like the fish."

"All I can say is," said my mother, "that she ought to like it. So—so—how shall I say? It is without anything, any of those herbs and savours that we use, without anything else in the world. It is innocent and pure like the soul of a nun."

"I am not an authority on such matters," said Mr. Wainwright—he was evidently pleased with himself—"but I should imagine that a nun's soul may be a trifle insipid. I myself dislike insipid things."

"No doubt some green pepper and garlic would improve it, I mean the fish," said my mother. "But there is one good thing about it—it is newly caught. We often have Norwegian fish in Seville which is something quite different and was fresh a long time ago."

How long since was it that this woman of the cows had been a girl? Her face was still so round and plump. And when the colours grew there naturally she must have been quite attractive. I did my best to see her as she was before this hard expression came into her face.

"I used to sell that fish myself, and sometimes," said my mother, "certain people would find fault with it." *"Caramba!"* I replied.

"You know as well as I do that it is an order of the holy Church. And if you do not eat the fish you know you will not be accepted up in Heaven when you die."

Mr. Wainwright made the observation that she had those people by the short hairs, which in England meant that they could find no adequate reply.

"And yet," my mother said. "I well remember one of them who answered me. He was one of those brown-haired men—we have a few—and what he said was, very blasphemously, that he felt uncertain if one went to Heaven after death, but if he ate this fish, said he, then he would know all that in several hours."

"Once when I was in Norway," Mr. Wainwright said, "I found that. . . ."

Oh, the crimson hat, the crimson cheeks! The hard expression probably had come because the woman was by these things and by others trying to go back to what she had been forty years ago. The constant strain—I saw her as a sailing ship—her body was indeed like bulging sails—a ship that strove to fight its way back to the harbour it could never find again, instead of sailing out serenely on the waters where the sun goes down. If only one could tell this woman——

At my arm there was a dish of vegetables and potatoes. And, although my mind was filled with other thoughts, I vaguely wondered if pota-

toes such as these could be agreeable. If Mr. Wainwright had not begged us to refrain from speaking of our stomachs I would have consulted him. But as my mother would object if I refused a dish and I was anxious not to have that kind of talk, I helped myself to one of these potatoes. How the thing was cut! And, when I ate a little, I perceived that this and the indifferent cooking of it were the only faults it had. In so far as it was a potato it was full of merit.

"I am so glad," Mr. Wainwright said, "that our Mariposa likes this place. Yes, I can see, my dear, that you are comfortable. It is most important than an artist should not worry about anything except her art." He lifted his glass and we lifted ours. "Let us drink," said he, "to our beautiful Mariposa and her success."

"It will be like a house," said I, "that is built upon you. That is to say"—I had not thought it well over before I spoke, since I was filled with gratitude that bubbled over—"what I mean," said I, "is that I shall owe you everything." I placed my hand upon his chubby wrist and showed him by a look how much I felt.

He glanced, a little frightened, round the room and slipped his hand away. "Now we'll make a bargain," said he. "You dance like you did in Seville and I'll keep all worries away from you. I can see the public rolling up, great audiences. . . . Those people who say that there is no appreciation of high art in this country,

they are all wrong. Millions of our people—well, at any rate, thousands—are fond of it, but they often don't know that they are. And that's where my job comes in. I don't bother about anything else; I just stick to my own job."

"The ass is killed by the cares of other people," said my mother.

"Good Heavens!" said Mr. Wainwright. He had been listening to the conversation of two ladies at two other little tables. "It's disgusting," said he, "that I should have to hear such stuff. Do you see that enormous woman with the fluffy, grey hair and the kind, stupid face? Well, she was telling the other one that she went to see Pauline Lord, the great American actress, in *Anna Christie* this afternoon. She said it was very sordid, and then she had a fit of giggling. I'd like to strangle her. And that other woman, the handsome one near the window, said that nothing would induce her to go to such a play. Oh, well, well. . . ."

CHAPTER V

IN the middle of the night I was awakened by my mother. She had come into the room and sat down on my bed. Her face was serious. She told me, when she saw I was awake, that she had for a time been looking from her window up into the moonlit sky and this had given her a feeling of great perturbation. She could not explain it. But so agitated had it made her that she was compelled to wake me up.

"By the sweet soul of your father who is with the saints," said she, "I had no thought of anything except to get a little air. Who could have supposed that there would be this difference between the skies of Seville and of London?"

As she spoke she shivered and I asked her if she would not come into the bed with me; but she said that she would go back to her apartment in three minutes. She must only tell me what had happened. There had been the moon, just like the moon in Seville, and it had been running through a sky of mottled clouds, large mottled clouds. And as she gazed at them a feeling she had never had before came over her.

I was wondering what it could be, because my mother was not one of those who sometimes see,

or think they see, what mortal eyes were not intended for. She was not the kind of woman who becomes a visionary martyr or a lunatic.

"I must have seen a thing like that before when I was on our flat roof, looking at the night," said she; "and yet—well, it was this: that moon was laughing in a cruel way—oh, it was extraordinary—as she passed behind the clouds. She lighted one of them and then she ran away from it and all the light was gone, so that the cloud was going through the sky as if it were a dead thing, like a dancing-hall when all the dancers and the other people have gone home."

All the years that I had known her I had never heard my mother talk like that. I started throwing off the bed-clothes, saying that I also wanted to look up into the sky.

"No! no!" she said, and pushed me back again. "It is enough that I have seen it. And I have not told you all. Those dead things, large and round and rushing on, they were a lot of worlds, like our world. They were dead—the moon was laughing at them." And she shuddered.

"Oh, my poor dear little mother," I exclaimed, "where did you get such fancies from?"

"Who knows?" said she. "I may have eaten something bad. All those dead worlds and our world—ours will be the same—oh yes, yes, I am sure of it."

To see my mother speaking in this fashion

made me very much afraid. It could not have arisen from the food. Perhaps she was bewitched. So, underneath the clothes, I crossed myself and murmured a quick prayer to the Blessed Virgin.

My mother had been staring straight in front of her. Then she turned sharply round and asked me what it was that I was muttering.

"I—I am afraid," I said.

"*Pues,* so am I," said she, "for if the world is going to be destroyed and with such ease, what are we others? We are nothing. We are as the vermin on a drowning man."

It was so terrible, this thought, that I did not remember about Heaven. Afterwards I told myself I had committed a great sin.

"And all our works—they will be swept away, away." My mother blew into the air. "Why did we ever come from Seville and have all this trouble, tribulation? . . . What is the use of it, I ask?"

"But if we had remained in Seville would we not have had our troubles? Surely," I continued, "they would have been numerous enough. If Mr. Wainwright had not come that night and seen me dance I should have danced there all my days. And how much money did I get?"

My mother looked at me and thought it over and she nodded. "You have reason when you talk like that," she said. "But we are miserable

beings—strivings always, and—just like a man who fills a box with air and then another box and then another. . . . We have travelled all this way and you will labour, you my little one——"

"It will not be so difficult as that," said I. "Moreover we shall go back with a lot of money."

"May it be the will of God," said she.

I said that if we had a lot of money and the world was not destroyed so soon, it would be very nice for us in Seville. "I will buy you everything you want," I said, "as, for example, a good ticket on the shady side for all the bull-fights and a beautiful mantilla you can wear to go to Mass and——"

"Oh, you are my dearest one," she said, and flung her arms about me. For a time she rocked me to and fro, and crooned one of those little Andalucian songs. We both were very happy. Then at last she said that she would leave me for the night.

"And promise me," I said, "that you will not be frightened any more. You made me frightened too."

"My sweet Mariposa!"

"Yes," I said, "and now I will acknowledge it. I was afraid that you were going to die. You know how it is said that people have ideas before they die."

"Well, I won't frighten you again," she said.

. . . . . .

While we were travelling to England, Mr. Wainwright had informed us of the part that I should play. It would be one inserted for me, first of all because I could not speak the language, secondly because I was no actress. All that did not matter in the least, he said. What I would do would be exactly what I did in Seville; he would have a reproduction of the place where I performed, and as the stage in London was a large one it would be quite simple to have my small stage put in a corner of it, and between that and the footlights my musicians and my variegated Spanish audience. He said it would be very pleasing. And he was not certain that he would not have my mother on the stage, sitting as she did in Seville with the other ladies.

"Well, I would like to do that," said my mother.

"And if someone makes himself objectionable—a young fellow in that audience on the stage could beckon to Mariposa, wave a kiss to her," said Mr. Wainwright, "or whatever else they do in Spain; and then you could spring up and have a little business. I think it would go very well," said he. "What is your opinion?"

My mother shrugged her shoulders. "You understand," said she, "the English taste, and I do not. But if it likes a thing of that sort. . . ." Owing to politeness she did not continue.

"Yes, but—look here," Mr. Wainwright said. "A little harmless fun—perhaps it's not the highest class of comedy. Oh, that reminds me of a tale—it may not be exactly relevant, but what the devil does that matter? Talking about comedy—you know they had a lot of Molière celebrations in America a year or two ago—his tercentenary—and France was represented by two members of the Academy. They went everywhere, of course in uniform—a green one, with gold palms all over it—and at a certain place out in the West a woman in the audience was heard to say she wished that these two gentlemen had not come dressed alike, because you could not know which one of them was Molière. . . . Now," said Mr. Wainwright, "why did I begin talking about Molière?"

My mother said she didn't know.

"Oh, yes," said he, "we were discussing comedy. I quite agree with you that the small incident I have proposed—of course we'd have to work it up a bit—is not the kind of thing you'd find in Molière. But, after all. . . . And if in Spain your taste is more refined, I think I know our public pretty well."

"As for ours," said my mother, "what it best likes is to see a naked dancer with a pair of long, black stockings. The next time you come to Seville——"

Mr. Wainwright looked at me uncomfortably.

"Ah yes," said my mother, "it's only the very

best dancers who can ascend to that. When every muscle from here"—she made a movement with her hand—"from here upwards is open to the eye, one has to have them absolutely in control. One has to move, they tell me, with consideration for the light on every portion of your body. I have no illusions for Mariposa, though she is the best of daughters. She will never be a dancer such as that."

"Cheer up," said Mr. Wainwright, "it really doesn't matter, at any rate so far as England is concerned. That little episode I spoke about—the Spanish dancing-hall—we'll work that out as soon as we arrive. It should become one of the best scenes of the whole revue. It will take three weeks or so to make all the arrangements. That will give you time to settle in London."

. . . . . .

Thus had Mr. Wainwright spoken to us in the train, but on the morning after we arrived in England I did not think we should ever settle down. One of those gentlemen who had been at the station came quite early. Both my mother and myself were dressed, but Mr. Wainwright was still sleeping, and we found that other gentleman—his name, as I learned afterwards, was Arthur Borax—tramping up and down the corridor. He took his hat off very elegantly when he saw us and he smiled. And so did I, because it seemed to me as if his hair was also smiling. I had never seen a head so sleek and radiant.

His eyes were dark and his complexion would have been admired in Spain, for it was white indeed; and he did not use powder, as young gentlemen in Spain are often under the necessity of doing. Mr. Borax had an anxious, clever sort of face. I think he would have learned my language quicker than did Captain Jennings, but he did not know a word of it, and so we could not speak to one another.

Having bowed he cleared his throat and smiled again and patted a long roll which he had underneath his arm. He took it out, unfastened it and held it up. My mother looked at me, I looked at her. It was a finished picture, all except the face; the picture of a woman beautifully dressed, but with no face at all. That part was empty. And the gentleman, this Mr. Borax, seemed to like it very much. Certain things were written underneath it, but of course in English.

"What can be the meaning of it all?" I asked.

My mother had become as white almost as Mr. Borax. "I have made my mind up," she said resolutely, "that whatever happens in this land, I will—I will. . . . But he is happy, that young man."

"His picture may be for the carnival," I said, "when it comes round again."

"Oh, nonsense," said my mother. "It is someone who has a disease so loathsome that her

face cannot be represented. That is surely what it is. Come, let us go away from him. He is a terrible young man. If one must show a thing like that one does it with a mournful countenance."

I put my hand on her to keep her back. It was so wonderful to be involved in such a mystery. We were involved, because this pale and elegant young man was eager to explain it, one could see. . . . Well, there was nothing to be done while Mr. Wainwright slept. Now and then a person had been walking through the corridor, some of them completely dressed and some of them in flowery or fantastic garments, going to the bath-room. There was not much harmony between their faces and their robes.

"By the anointed bells of the Giralda," said I to myself, "now something is about to happen." I was at an age, I beg you to remember, and likewise of an education which is asking always that something should happen and is very blind to what is happening all round it. Some day, if I should write another book, it will consist of two old ladies on two rocking-chairs. They will simply talk to one another as they rock and worthy readers of it never will complain that nothing happens.

A few more minutes in the corridor—keeping my mother back and repeating, over and over again, for the benefit of this young gentleman, the one or two English words which I had by

this time learned—and then very fortunately Mr. Wainwright appeared. He was going to his bath and was astonished that we three should all be there so early. Mr. Borax told him something and held up the faceless picture.

Mr. Wainwright smiled upon it and he patted Borax on the back. "You don't know what this is," he said to us. "It's his idea—quite good, I call it—that's how we shall advertise you. . . . Very good idea, isn't it? Yes, all over London, thousands of them. . . ." He said something to the pale young man—I think an enquiry; they were very pleased with one another.

"A chicken is not hatched for itself alone," said my mother in a rather loud voice.

"Eh what?" said Mr. Wainwright. "What is that you say?"

"If I knew what you are talking about with your friend—that is, if it concerns us," said my mother, "then I should be gratified."

"Oh, certainly," said Mr. Wainwright. "I was just about to tell you." He wrapped himself up more securely in his garment and then gave the explanation. Under this odd picture were the words which said it was that of the loveliest of women, who would soon be making her appearance at the Excelsior Theatre, and for further details let the public come and see.

"Frankly, don't you think it's rather cute?" said Mr. Wainwright. "You can advertise and you can advertise—it all depends."

"That is the truth," my mother said. "But what do I know about advertising? Only if you have that picture I believe you will offend the holy ones."

"You mean?" said Mr. Wainwright.

"They have made us one way. Is it not a sacrilege to make another sort of human creature?"

"Well, I'm sure I don't know. I'll go on and have my bath," said Mr. Wainwright. Then he asked us to proceed without him. Mr. Borax would assist us.

On the way my mother, as you can imagine, had the greatest fear of the result if Mr. Wainwright used that picture. I endeavoured to console her, saying that there are two sides to everything.

"A right side and a wrong one," she remarked.

"But have we not," I asked, "a saying that a person not in love is full of folly, and another saying that a man in love is full of foolishness?"

We had arrived down in the hall. The little, white man of the cows was whispering most earnestly in Barnfield's ear, while in his hand he held a newspaper. And Mr. Borax with a little pantomime made clear to us that he was saying what would happen at the races of that afternoon.

"Why does he keep it all so sceret?" asked my mother. "Does he think he may be wrong? But no!" she said, as Mr. Borax ushered us

into the dining-room. "One sees that he is absolutely certain."

As for me, I wished that I was half as certain of what would occur to me under the auspices of Mr. Wainwright and this pale young Borax. . . . I suppose that it is so with everybody—at one moment very sure that they will march into the highest places, at another moment full of anguish that they never will arrive. Perhaps it is the best if one goes plodding on, without much thought of what the journey's end will be. Yet here was I on such a dazzling journey that I could not be expected to refrain from wondering, at times . . . wondering, as I sat by the roadside with the shadows or the sunlight falling over me.

On that first morning, as we all were in the lounge, several of the persons in the room were busy with their newspapers. So vast the papers seemed to me and of such comfort the plush chairs that very possibly the readers meant to stay in them all through the day; it therefore would not incommode them very much, I thought, if we were not entirely silent. This I said in answer to my mother, who considered always that if someone who could read was doing it, one should exhibit due respect and courtesy; she never got beyond imagining that readers were obliged to spell out every word and, in pursuance of this painful, honourable operation, had a spe-

cial claim upon us. Mr. Wainwright did not scruple to embark upon a conversation; and when I perceived that she was agitated I explained it to her that these people could all read with great facility, for I had looked round me and beheld that only one old gentleman was letting a thin finger slowly move along the lines of print.

"This is not a silence room," said Mr. Wainwright, "and besides they can't understand us."

I thought that if my mother and myself had not become accustomed to his Spanish we should not have understood the dear man very easily.

He said that he would like to take us to the theatre, so that I might look at the small room which I was going to have—he was afraid it really was a little room, but the Excelsior was not a very modern place. However, he had got a jewel of a dresser who was of Italian origin and doubtless I could speak to her. This woman, I replied, would not be needed, as I would not think of letting any other person but my mother help me with my toilette.

Mr. Wainwright stroked his chin. He said that with elaborate effects of lighting it was necessary to have dressers who were perfect artists. "It is for your own sake," he continued, "that I would like you to have this Italian woman.

If your mother will look on while she is doing you and learn how it is done——"

. . . . . .

While we went down in a motor-car my mother showed him how it stood. She said that I was one of those girls who was very modest; she was confident that I would always be like that. Mr. Borax was looking out of the window.

"Of course, of course," said Mr. Wainwright.

"And no one," said my mother, "has ever looked at her naked body, so that——"

"Why are sea-birds so unmusical?" asked Mr. Wainwright suddenly. "I can never make it out. Can you? They produce a noise, those sea-gulls and the—the others; but it's not a nice noise; is it?"

"I don't know anything about them," said my mother.

"Don't you? Well, I do think it is odd that they should listen all their lives to—you can really call it music—winds and waves and so forth, and yet make such an ugly sound themselves, a squawking sound. I'd like to know the reason of it."

"What for?" observed my mother. "Let them squawk, I say." Her own voice had become contemptuous.

But Mr Wainwright was most cheerful. "You'd imagine they would imitate the winds and waves," he said, "just like the land-birds

do, the blackbirds and the larks, who reproduce the melodies of trees that rustle and—at least I suppose they do that."

My mother made no comment. We were driving down a great street full of motor-cars, and splendid shops and people, but her face was like a wall.

"Maybe the reason," Mr. Wainwright said, "is that the sea-birds are too busy hunting for their food. That comes first. And also with human beings, I expect. And music and all that have to wait until the primary instincts are satisfied. Yes, I expect that's it."

We none of us spoke very much till we arrived at the Excelsior. It was a very fine place, with large placards everywhere about the entrance and some portraits of performers, and the whole of that entrance made of gold and blue.

"Well, here we are," said Mr. Wainwright. "Let's go in."

A huge man in uniform was looking after us, and then two other ones appeared; and as we walked on through a hall of mirrors, with a palm tree here and there, I felt as if my heart was standing still. That I should come to such a place!

"Mariposa, they will think that you are drunk," my mother whispered to me from behind. "Why do you walk like that?"

I seized her hand and pressed it. "Dearest love," I murmured.

"Have no fear," said she. "I will not leave you."

We went on, up a round, curling staircase. An elderly woman was at work on the gilt railing and she hummed a song. As we approached her she stopped humming, but did not give Mr. Wainwright any salutation. This, after all the splendour of the building and the way in which the other ones received him, had a swift effect on me. Of course I should have known that this old woman must have been engaged while Mr. Wainwright was abroad. But, at the moment, all I knew was that one need not be so overwhelmed by everything. I would myself have started humming, I believe, if we had not then, all of us, gone into a small room. I scarcely noticed how luxurious it was; and as a young man at a typewriter got up and bowed to us I waved my hand a little at him in the Spanish fashion and he blushed.

Mr. Wainwright went up to a cupboard and took out a box of chocolates. Then I saw my mother also was at ease, just as I was myself, for she enquired the price of such a box. But Mr. Wainwright only mumbled something. And as we sat down and ate the chocolates he said that he was very glad to see us in his den, his office. On the walls, which were of ruddy

wood, there hung no pictures, but some ancient programmes, which were framed in black.

Mr. Borax and the typist stood beside each other, undetermined what they ought to do. And Mr. Wainwright, after he had hung his hat up and his coat, was likewise undecided. What was in his mind I do not know, but what he did was to sink down into a chair behind a closed desk, turn the chair round—it was on a mechanism—so that he looked full at us, and then say several times, "Ah, very good!"

I think we Spaniards are more clever than the English in the art of doing nothing. It is true that I have met some English people—usually youngish men—who have sat immovably for a considerable time. But it was clear that they were not enjoying it, whereas we others can be like so many quiet fishes over whom the stream is flowing.

There was nothing to be said on business matters, as we had arranged all that in Seville. And poor Mr. Wainwright tried to think of something else to talk about, and couldn't. He might well have taken us to see the little dressing-room; and that is what he ultimately did, after fidgeting about and looking hard at his subordinates and at the ceiling and the walls and saying: "Very good, very good."

So we got up again and started for the dressing-room. While we were walking down a very narrow staircase we encountered one more func-

tionary, who was coming up to find us. It was that one who, the night before, had given me the flowers; and Mr. Wainwright told us that this was his excellent stage-manager, Augustus Drake.

"Ah, *bon jour!*" said Mr. Drake. He was much more voluble than at the station; and as he knew no Spanish he addressed us in French. His well-fed, undistinguished countenance was very amiable. After he had greeted us he laughed so much that we did not have to reply. And all his colleagues laughed and were still laughing when we reached the dressing-room.

"Well now," said Mr. Wainwright, "here it is. Don't say that it's not worthy of you. If you do I'll tell you all the famous people who have used it."

"But no! It is excellent!" I cried, although the door was only being opened. It might be of any size or shape, I did not care. And even if good Mr. Wainwright had determined that I was the loveliest of women, had I not in Seville been without a dressing-room, since I appeared in garments of an ordinary kind which I put on at home?

Now as I entered I saw that the walls were white-washed and that pictures out of illustrated papers had been pasted on them. In one corner there stood a well-used dressing table; that and three chairs and a frayed waste-paper basket were the furniture. The walls were likewise three; they were of different lengths, and that

one opposite the entrance had the window in it.

"How I wish I had a better one to offer you," said Mr. Wainwright. "That's the worst of this old building. I'll put up your name outside and do a little beautifying—a few rugs and half-a-dozen pots of hyacinths. What do you say to that, my dear?"

I told him that the plants would please me very much; they would be useful for my altars that I would erect against the walls which had no window in them.

"Altars? Altars in a dressing-room?" said he. "I thought that it was only matadors who needed them."

"Señor impresario," said my mother with solemnity, "we all require them. Is it not a seemly thing that Mariposa should invoke the Blessed Virgin ere she goes down to the stage? As for the second altar, I know nothing."

"That one is for Miguel," I said. "The center of it shall contain his photograph."

"Oh, well, if you desire it," said my mother.

"So that with my bosom full of love," I said, "I will go down and not fear anything."

"It seems to me," remarked my mother, "that you have forgotten the old proverb: that man who has nothing is afraid of nothing."

"Love is something quite exceptional," I said.

"That is your opinion," said my mother.

Meanwhile the pale young Borax had been talking rapidly to Mr. Wainwright. Mr. Drake said something too, but something cold and stern. Young Borax flushed and bit his lips. But Mr. Wainwright's face said nothing.

"How I wish I had some dice," my mother said to me. "Then we could throw and happily discover what is going to come to us. . . . Yet, perhaps, as we are going to have an altar in this room——"

"Two altars," I corrected her. "I also think it would not be religious. But why should we throw at all? I feel——"

"Dear ladies," Mr. Wainwright said, "excuse me interrupting you. My advertising manager has put a proposition forward. I would like you to consider it. This other gentleman, Mr. Drake, is opposed to it; but I will leave it in your hands. Mr. Borax thinks that it would be what they call local colour."

"What is local colour?" said my mother. "I have never seen it."

"It is—how shall I say?" said Mr. Wainwright. "The suggestion is that we should have a photo made of Mariposa praying to the Virgin—if it's not against your principles, you know. I won't offend them for the world."

"Thank you very much," my mother said.

"I ought to mention," said Mr. Wainwright, "that my friend here, Drake, is not at all in

favour of it. He says that your principles will not permit a thing like that. If he is right. . . ."

My dear old mother looked at me, most thoughtfully.

"And if you turn it down," said Mr. Wainwright, "I need scarcely say that we will bow to your decision. Borax says himself that he has no pretensions to be an authority on matters of the Church, of your Church. He has only put it forward as an advertising stunt, I should say as a beautiful advertisement. Now, will you tell us what you think of it?"

Both Mr. Drake and Mr. Borax stared at her, like partly famished dogs; but she gave no reply to anyone.

"There is not the slightest need," said Mr. Wainwright, "to decide off-hand. To-morrow or the next day will do just as well. It won't in any case appear till after the first night. That other one, the picture with no face, would be ridiculous if we let people see her face."

But Drake and Borax were still waiting with the greatest eagerness, and my dear mother did not wish to disappoint them. So she told the impresario that she would settle this affair at once; she would settle it with me.

And, having beckoned me to leave the room with her, she whispered in my ear that she could not think what to answer. "One of them," said she, "has told him that it is against my

principles. And is it?" She was very much perplexed.

"I thought," said I, "we should not have to worry about anything in England. It is such a question. . . . How can you and I make answer? . . . But I know!"

"My little flower!" she cried.

I said I would compose a letter to our priest, Don Carlos—seeing that we need not instantly reply—and I would ask Don Carlos with regard to principles. He certainly would know about our principles in every circumstance and he would answer me.

My mother listened with a glowing face, and when I finished threw her arms around me. She then danced me back into the little room and gaily said that we were writing home to Seville and would let them have the answer when it came. Mr. Wainwright and the others, when he had translated that to them, were all astonished; but no more was said about this question.

Mr. Wainwright said he would work out with Drake that good idea of representing on the stage a little Andalucian dancing-hall. In the meantime there was nothing much for us to do. What would we like to do? Oh, with respect to dresses, there would be a fellow coming to the Worcestershire and he would make me real Spanish costumes. Otherwise, for two or three weeks, we would really not have much to do except enjoy ourselves. Perhaps we had our own ideas con-

cerning that, he said. So many people had a miserable time in trying to discover new enjoyments. Possibly we liked the old ones, looking into shops, for instance. There would be a box for us that night.

"And we will go among the actresses," my mother said, "and you will tell them that my Mariposa is the loveliest of all the women in the world."

CHAPTER VI

BUT of the troupe at the Excelsior I only met one man that day and for the next few days. He was a young man who was going to be my dancing partner. Mr. Wainwright had some arguments to make me have him, even though in Spain the woman does those dances by herself. I did not know if he was right in saying that a partner would improve the dance—by standing in the background and occasionally clasping me in his embrace—nor could I say if the addition of a man would please the British public which, said Mr. Wainwright, yearned in everything for sentiment, more sentiment; but when I saw the dancer I immediately said that I would have him. He was perfect. I could see that with his very even features—the round, friendly eyes and the straight nose and lips that were like half-a-dozen rosebuds—he possessed a fiery, wicked devil. Oh, the dear young man. His fingers thrilled me as no others ever had done, and when he was standing near me I could hardly look at him. But if I once begin to write about Raimundo Robles (which was not his real name, for he was an American called Brown), if I begin to write of him then I shall find it easier to go on writing than to stop.

Since Robles had once been in Cuba and knew Spanish we did not need Mr. Wainwright as interpreter; and that first afternoon when he had introduced us and explained how he would like us to perform the dance—giving us a rough idea of it—we went on practising and practising after he had gone away. The assistant musical director of the place, a fat young man with pale hair and blue eyes, was at a small piano, and he played most amiably and skilfully. All that we had to do was to make movements with our bodies and to sing a little—he could always find the proper music. So we went on practising and trying variations and, between them, talked of other things. We were not on the stage, you know, but in a large room in which scenery was piled against the wall. My mother was there too.

And now and then, at the far end of the room where my mother was, a gentleman came in—two or three times Mr. Borax came, although he did not have to ask us anything about advertisements, and Mr. Drake looked in and watched us with his head a little sideways while we danced.

Raimundo told me, as we went through one of the majestic, stately movements, that he loved the Latin people, and that he and I would have a huge success together. How I wished that I could dance as did that Concha in Seville.

"Woe is me," said I, "but I am not a light and graceful one."

"You do very well," said he, "for dancing such as this. You have something monumental which is very good. A little more self-confidence and then. . . ."

I asked him if he really thought it, and I gazed at him appealingly.

"Now let us have a rest," said he. And we went over to some carpets that were fastened up into long rolls and made a most convenient seat.

"Tell me all about your life," he said.

"But there is nothing," I replied. "Now only does my life begin."

"Then I will tell you about mine," he said. He lay back beautifully on the roll of carpet and he lit a cigarette. "Before I went to Cuba," he began, "I was not brilliant as a dancer."

"But," I said, "——"

He put his hand up. "No! no! I was just like other people. In fact I was no dancer when I lived there first. I was a dry-goods salesman. That is all." He meditated for a little and he smiled into the waving smoke. "But I was friendly with a little girl, a creole, and after I had picked up some of the language I used to go and stand outside the iron bars at a certain window and exchange silly phrases with this girl. Her sister was there all the time—and oh, she was not as pretty as you."

I could have listened to Raimundo's story for an hour, but just then Mr. Borax came into the

room. "Ah, ah," he said, looking vaguely at us, and went out again.

The man at the piano played some notes, but we proceeded with our conversation.

"You have never been in Cuba," said Raimundo, "so you don't know how the girls use *cascarilla,* which is powdered egg-shell, on their faces. For a pretty girl it is a shame, and that one I was talking of——"

"Then she was pretty after all?" I said.

Raimundo smiled as if he were a god. He stretched himself. "Just pretty, nothing more," said he, "not beautiful. One day I told her that she spoiled herself with all that *cascarilla,* and she stamped her foot and struck a splendid attitude. One couldn't help admiring it. When I was with some friends of mine next day I imitated her, and someone said I had it in me to become a famous dancer. So I went to places where they danced, and soon I found that I could do the classic dances, not the gipsy ones, quite well. I got a small engagement at the Opera, which was rather wonderful. Then I went into partnership with a native who had what they call "hands of gold on a guitar"—we travelled round the country; then as two Cuban ex-insurgents, we joined a circus in the United States—and since then I have risen rapidly."

He finished and I was admiring him when Mr. Borax entered once again. This time he said a few words, and Raimundo answered him. He

answered back, but in a mocking fashion. As he went away Raimundo hastily looked round for something to throw after him, but in the meantime he had disappeared.

"What did the fellow say?" I asked.

Raimundo laughed explosively. "I told him," he explained, "that we were sitting down because it was as hot as Hades, and he answered that Americans go everywhere. Sharp fellow! . . . Shall we go on with our steps? I'm jolly glad that you've turned up in London."

My mother had been sewing and she now looked up. "That is right," she said, "that is right. Work well, my children."

I was blushing. "Please," I said, "excuse her. She is only an old woman."

"Hurrah for the old woman!" cried Raimundo.

"Let us dance so well," I said, "that on the first night all the people will be shouting, as they do in Andalucia, "God bless your mother!"

"I have been blessing her already, for a long time, dear," whispered Raimundo with a trembling voice into my ear.

. . . . . .

Two days after this it was a Sunday, and Raimundo came to lunch with us at our hotel. We had become the best of friends. He carried in his buttonhole an orchid, and he brought for me a very choice bouquet of orchids mixed with maidenhair. By this time everyone, I think, in

the hotel had gained some knowledge of me and, as a result, my slightest acts in public were most sharply—but I will not say unsympathetically—scrutinised. And I should also add that this was not the conduct of them all; a fair proportion, though, were such adept observers that their distance from us in the dining-room or in the lounge did not appear to trouble them.

"They think," said Mr. Wainwright, "that their own lives are so dull compared with yours, and therefore the poor things are fascinated."

"Why do you say poor things?" I asked.

"Are they not poor deluded things," said he, "to fancy that their lives are not fantastic and tremendous?"

"Now, that's rather good," declared Raimundo. He was of the cleverest.

As for those people, they were fond of watching me, for instance when I ate an egg or when I walked across the hall. Thus I was not astonished when I saw our section of the dining-room was very interested in Raimundo and his orchids. Most of the guests, however, out of courtesy, looked in a furtive kind of way.

But we were also interested in them. I can remember we were talking of that old dance, the fandango, which had in the Middle Ages irritated the great people of the Church. Raimundo Robles told us how the Pope and Cardinals had instituted an enquiry. They announced that the fandango should not be condemned with-

out fair trial; and some people were invited by those reverend judges to exhibit it. Then, as the people danced, the music and the whole affair were so contagious that these grave ecclesiastics started drumming with their fingers on the table. They did more than that—they rose and shook their garments and threw out their legs, and soon the whole assemblage—Pope and Cardinals and all—were dancing the fandango.

You remember the stout, grey-haired lady I have spoken of before? Well, as Raimundo said the last words in a voice that was a little loud and with some laughter, she did not conceal her disapproval. He was laughing about Cardinals and she a Roman Catholic. Her face was red, and though the story had amused me I was sorry for the pain it gave her. She was standing up so nobly in defence of ancient Cardinals; their names she did not want to know, their possibly defective morals she did not enquire about—they were the Princes of the Church and so must be defended.

"Let us talk of something else," I said. "There is a lady over there who likes the Cardinals."

"I wager sixpence," Mr. Wainwright said, "that she's a convert."

"Once," I said, "we had an English Consul in Seville—he was a very good man, I have heard, and very kind to everybody. He was kind to the cathedral also; he declared that there was much that one could say for it."

After that we spoke of our performance, which Raimundo was rehearsing with me. Mr. Wainwright said he would not interfere; we knew more more about such things than anybody else. He was responsible for the environment, and that would be as good as he could make it. "I am never satisfied," said he, "save with the highest."

"Listen!" said Raimundo, and he made a movement with his head to where the rotund woman of the cows was sitting with her small white husband. . . . "I'm a good American," Raimundo said, "and so I love them too, the duchesses and countesses."

"Aren't you a little behind the times?" said Mr. Wainwright. "But that woman, she may really know a few, though she does talk about them rather as if she were playing the trombone. I can never think about the trombones but I remember reading of them in some verses. They were called 'preposterous trombones.' "

"I don't personally mind at all," Raimundo said, "whether she knows any duchesses or the duchesses know her. In my opinion duchess-worship is a beautiful and touching deed. There are so few of them; you cannot hope to have your duchess to yourself, and——"

"It appears to me that you are talking nonsense," said the impresario.

"No doubt you're right," Raimundo said. "I'm not a political economist—is that what I

mean?—but a dancer. And I love them, both the male and female ones. They do their bit towards giving us a brighter London."

"Heavens! Have you ever seen a duchess?" Mr. Wainwright asked. "There are exceptions, but——"

"I quite agree," Raimundo said, "that native specimens are less deserving—it's so easy to go promenading as a British marquis if you are a British marquis. What I love are all those enterprising foreign dukes and counts who come from God knows where and live in London always. I could tell you of a French count—I was asking friends of mine in France about him, friends of mine who are in all their peerage books—their names are written on those Versailles walls which have the names of nobles who took part in the crusades—and as for this old sportsman, here in London, when I mentioned him they said——"

"Be careful," interrupted Mr. Wainwright. "Anybody may be listening. Now tell me more about your dance."

"Oh, that's all right. We'll make a first-class show of it," Raimundo said. "And in our intervals of practising, this week, I'm going to help in building altars. Mariposa has invited me to help her."

"It would be hard work," said I to Mr. Wainwright, "if I had to do it all myself."

The admirable porter, Barnfield, came into the dining-room and, walking up to us as if he were

upon a desert—so, at all events, it seemed to me —announced that Mr. Wainwright was wanted on the telephone. No other word did Barnfield utter; yet he had such personality that you could not help being fascinated. I have heard about a noted wit who made the table rock with laughter when he said that he would like some salt; and folk who tell the tale insinuate that those who laughed were foolish people. But they saw the man, they saw the humour that was in him and which did not require to be expressed. So it was with Barnfield. You who never heard him will perhaps not want to hear about him. I am sorry you have never seen him, any more than you have seen those lands of which he was the gay explorer.

Mr. Wainwright said, when he returned, that he would have been glad to help us with the building of those altars. It would have been a new experience, and good exercise as well; now that he was back in London he did not take exercise enough. He wished that he were not so busy. And I wished that I had never told him that the second of these altars was to have on it the photograph of Miguel.

. . . . . .

Raimundo got some pieces of white wood from the stage carpenter; he also got a hammer and some nails, and though he must have seen a hundred altars in his life, he fancied that with these materials and implements we could con-

struct one. When I said that the white wood alone, except you were a very clever person, would not be sufficient and that we required some other substances—ebony or marble—he could not think of where to find them. After all, he said, we were not building for posterity but for myself alone; indeed it was much better not to make a thing that would survive me, since my dressing-room might come into the occupation of an irreligious actor who would scoff at finding objects so unusual in such a place, or possibly would even let them serve a mundane purpose. And, besides, a prayer sent up in front of any humble altar was as efficacious as the same prayer made before a great artistic masterpiece. So we should take the work in hand, said he, at once. He was a very amateurish carpenter, but he had some idea of what was needed. If we made a rough kind of a table we would have an altar, primitive but yet an altar. Any decorations could be subsequently carved out of the wood or else be painted on it. Then with those pots of hyacinths the whole thing would be most agreeable.

When we began we found we could do nothing satisfactory without a saw. So then Raimundo went to fetch one; I used the opportunity to bring some water for the hyacinths. The tap was half way down the staircase, and when I came back there was a woman at the entrance of my room. She was the actress, Maisie Grantley,

who was one of the chief personages at this theatre. We had been introduced, but all our conversation had been the few words of English I had learned. So we were practically total strangers and I could not think why she was coming up to see me in my room. I stopped when I was eight or nine steps underneath her, put my jug of water down and wondered.

As she turned and saw me she was smiling in a very brilliant fashion. She was lovely with a kind of loveliness I had not seen till then, for she had yellow hair and dark eyes—every man, I thought, must be in love with her and long to have his arms round her delicious waist. And as I looked at her with admiration and with happiness that she should deign to come to visit me, she went on smiling, but with an expression which I did not understand about the corners of her mouth. If she could have spoken to me what would she have said?

"Hullo!" It was Raimundo. "I have got the saw." Then he looked further up, to Maisie Grantley and said: "Oh!"

It was peculiar. I stood there, between them, looking first at one and then the other. As we say, it is no easy thing to guard a house that has two doors. One might think that they were bewitched—they were so still that when, embarrassed, I looked somewhere else I noticed that the water in the jug was moving more than they. What enmity was this? The very air was noisy

in comparison with these two people. Then it burst upon me what the reason was. No doubt if I had not been so bewildered or so inexperienced in such affairs I would have guessed before. But never once in Seville had I come between a woman and a man. Could any situation be more interesting?

Raimundo made a sound between his teeth. The poor boy was enduring torment. I resolved that I would bring this to an end. What should I say to her? That smile she had was turning to a sneer. Should I, without consideration, tell her that she was no longer on the throne? Poor woman, she was loved no longer by Raimundo—I was sorry for her. To be cast aside by such a one as he must be a shattering blow. What could I do? . . . But as I looked at her, I think with tenderness, she still was sneering. Then I looked more coldly; underneath her yellow hair I saw a shade, a darkness. It reminded me of once when I had watched a cornfield near a darkling wood; the golden field was being dragged by rough winds to the sombre, gloomy wood. The yellow corn was nearly prostrate, trying to avoid this horror. And the yellow hair of Maisie Grantley would be overwhelmed. Oh, Maisie, are you not my sister?

"I'm afraid," said she—it was a mincing voice —"that I intrude? I'd better go away." But she did not attempt to go.

Raimundo told me afterwards what she said

and what he replied. "Please yourself," said he.

"Oh, please myself! That's really kind of you. That's . . ." and she flung out such a volume of abuse that he would not repeat those words, he said.

When she stopped for breath he spoke a little, but it sounded ineffective. And when she began again, with flashing eyes and stamping feet, not only did he give up all attempt to answer her, but he put both his hands up to his ears. Since he did that and I could barely comprehend a single word, they fell as uselessly as rain upon the sea. But Maisie was not in a mood to notice this. . . . At last she finished and, with lips pressed tight together, she came down the stairs. She looked, as she went past me, just as if she would explode unless a further stream of words could thrust their way out. And when she had gone a step or two beyond Raimundo she restrained herself no longer. Uttering at first a shrill scream, which appeared to be addressed to all the world, the Grantley's face became vindictive as she made allusion to the saw that still was hanging from Raimundo's hand.

"Go, saw yourselves two coffins, or one coffin if you prefer. There's wood enough. I'd like to help you, but unluckily I've got to get a move on." Off she bounded, but when she was out of sight she raised a piercing voice again and told us—also a considerable number, probably, of

other people—that she would rejoice if both of us could rapidly go down to hell.

Raimundo shook himself. He tried to smile.

"*Vaya!* Let her be," I said. "Do not distress yourself."

"Oh, damn the woman," said Raimundo. "It's an outrage. She deserves that I should—I should——"

He was so excited that I dipped my hand into the water and then placed it on his brow. "Let us go up into my room," I said, "and rest a while."

Then, as we were walking up, he kissed my hand, but he was so disturbed by what had happened that he did not kiss it very seriously, I thought.

I laid my head against his face. "Oh, dearest one," I whispered, "what I mean to do is to assassinate her, for I will not have her come between us."

"Eh what? No! you mustn't. That's an awful thing to say."

We were by this time in the little room. I tried to cling to him, but he was pushing me away. I could not understand the man. "Oh, my love, she has a power over you," I said; "but I will break that power, I promise you."

Then with a violent jerk he freed himself. I stumbled on those pieces of white wood and nearly fell. He did not try to pick me up, but

with dilated eyes he stared at me. My world was spinning round and round.

And staring at me still, as if he thought that I would spring at him, he glided towards the door. I would indeed have sprung at him and smothered him in kisses, had he let me.

As he reached the door it flashed upon me that he never would come back. How could I unbewitch him? I stretched out my hands imploringly. He shrank away and gasped the words, "You murderess!"

That is how he trusted me when I was full of love for him.

"Come back! Come back!" I cried.

"I never will!" He spat upon the floor.

And so I took a piece of wood and threw it at him. But it struck against the wall and he was gone. . . . I sank down on the floor, my life in ruins. All this scattered wood, that was my life. This wood—now I must build the altars by myself. Well, I would build them, I would pray before them that Raimundo should—but if he was bewitched then it was not for his destruction I must pray. If I could look into his heart and see what urged him on. . . . My hand was playing with a piece of wood. But I had thrown a portion of an altar! This was surely sacrilegious. There would be a heavy punishment for such a sin. And as for building altars, could an impious person, such as I was, dare to do it? Everything was at an end. I was half dead al-

ready with this anguish. Let me die, O God, I prayed.

And presently I rose and went towards the window. It was open to that summer afternoon. Great walls rose up on every side into the bluish air. They seemed to rock. They leaned to one another, telling of the mysteries inside them. Verily, as we say, every house is a world. And also there are those in Andalucia who say that every man is a people. Yes, every man is a people; and we others, who look at them, so foolishly complain because they are beyond our understanding.

CHAPTER VII

HOW long I stayed at the window, looking out into the dreary world I cannot say. That ugliness of high, blank walls was so in harmony with my sad spirits that I would not look at the fair sky which floated over them or at the little wisps of smoke that wandered upwards from the houses. Everything for me was finished, all around me were vast walls.

Somebody was sighing. I turned round and there was Mr. Wainwright, breathing hard. But he was looking just as amiable as always; no, he had a more than usually amiable appearance. He was resolutely beaming at me, I could see, despite the difficulty with his breath.

"These stairs—oh dear," he said, "I'm not so young. . . ." He came quite close to me and put his hand upon my shoulder. And the shaking of his hand exhorted me to be courageous. Why could I not struggle up great flights of stairs? More plainly than with words his hand was speaking to me and it said that there is nothing nobler than to struggle upwards out of darkness.

As I turned away from him the walls out

there, the hazy sunlight and the sky were indistinct.

There is nothing nobler, said his hand, than to rise up triumphantly into the clearness of the sky, when the grim shadows think that they have covered you for good, that they have buried you.

"After all," said Mr. Wainwright, "after all, my dear——"

I flung myself into his arms.

He rocked me to and fro. "There, there!" he said.

I had lost my courage when his kind voice started speaking to me, but as it continued I grew brave again.

He held me then at arms' length, with his hands at each side of my neck; he smiled at me in such a manner that I really could not stop myself from smiling too.

"As a general rule," said Mr. Wainwright, "I don't occupy myself with my people's private affairs; but in your case it is different. You are in a strange land, you don't know our ways. Now"—I believe that I was looking mournful—"you must not have a relapse," he said. "I know all about it and you'll see our friend Raimundo trotting back as peacefully as possible."

"Oh, do you truly, do you truly think so?" I asked.

"Only give him time," said Mr. Wainwright.

"God be merciful!"

"Well, if he doesn't come," said Mr. Wainwright in a very deep voice, "we can always get another dancing-partner for you."

But while he spoke so solemnly his eyes were twinkling and I turned away my head, because he knew how much I loved Raimundo.

"Bless my heart and soul," said he, "but I believe I see how matters stand. You shan't be disappointed, you shall have him back. Yes, the identical Raimundo. Shall we say on Monday next?"

Was Mr. Wainwright making fun? How could he know that just on Monday next Raimundo's anger would have vanished?

"What he wants," said Mr. Wainwright, "is a little time for cooling down. When you consider he has lived in Cuba it's extraordinary he should be so stunned, so horrified at you threatening to kill your rival. Naturally, as we are in London, you won't do anything of the sort."

"If you prefer that I should not?" I said. "If you and he prefer——"

He patted me paternally upon the check. "Now that's what I call a good girl," he said. "Simply to oblige a friend she is prepared to fall in with our insular ways. It's really good of you. And while we are talking about these things, you must promise me never, never to kill anyone while you're in England. I suppose you people in Spain, if your affections get

involved, are very much like those in the opera *Carmen*. Very picturesque and all that—nothing I admire so much as passion—but in the proper place. So promise me, Mariposa."

Who would not have promised? Mr. Wainwright had guaranteed that Raimundo would come back to me, and no one could be dubious of anything that Mr. Wainwright said. He had undertaken that Raimundo should return, so that the least that I could do was to oblige him by not killing Maisie Grantley. As I had not been mixed up in complicated love-affairs in Seville I had never slain a rival. And I put away the thought of doing it to Maisie since it met with Mr. Wainwright's disapproval; and if you are in a foreign country you must often do as they do. I should have been able by the death of Maisie to make dear Raimundo see how much I loved him still, in spite of his exasperating conduct; but if he would understand without this act, then I might really spare myself the trouble and spare Maisie.

"First of all we'll tidy up this room a little," Mr. Wainwright said.

I would have hindered him, for why should he demean himself? But he insisted, though his body was not of the kind which could go down on all fours very easily. As we were putting up the wood into a pile against the wall I said that I was very glad Raimundo would return on Monday.

"I was going to tell you," Mr. Wainwright said, "that there's an invitation for you and your mother to go down to Lady Loseford's for the week-end. She is Captain Jennings' sister. It would be enjoyable, I think. He says there isn't any party, but he'll do his best to give you a nice time. And you'll come back all fresh for Monday. Your mother and you will get on very well down there."

"I should," I said, "have liked to take Raimundo."

"You surprise me," said Mr. Wainwright. "He has acted very badly towards you—oh yes, he has—and you must leave him out in the cold for a little time. These professional dancers—the men, you know—very often they are the most absurd people."

"But I love him."

"Tut—tut. . . . I was going to tell you about these dancing fellows—they're the very devil sometimes—and, if we don't take care, Raimundo will be getting just like that. I knew one who used to get a man to give him strange, small packages in Piccadilly so that I should suppose he was a drug-fiend. Raimundo has other vanities, and you'll be doing me a service, and him as well, if you're a trifle firm with him."

I thought . . . And then as Mr. Wainwright seemed to have so firmly made his mind up, I declared that I would act according to his wishes.

He was very glad; and then he talked about the week-end. He would take us to the station —his engagements were unhappily so numerous that he could not come down with us to Huntingdale—and the conductor of the train would keep his eye on us.

"And in the meantime," I said, "in the meantime what will the Grantley woman do against Raimundo?"

"But what should she do?" said Mr. Wainwright. "Don't let that disturb you. She's quite harmless."

"I don't say that she will murder him," I said, "because I know now that you don't have murdering in England; but you will have evil eyes or spells or other things."

"If she performs any of those tricks," said Mr. Wainwright, "I'll give her the sack."

"But I would sleep much better," I protested, "if I knew that she had left off living."

Mr. Wainwright shook his head from one side to the other, like one of those round Chinese mandarins. "I should not be at all astonished," he observed, "if you and she became the greatest friends."

"I don't care if she wants to be my friend or enemy," I said.

And Mr. Wainwright laughed. "One saves oneself a good deal of trouble," he said, "by not caring whether people are friends or enemies. And sometimes if you want to know—well, it

reminds me of a friend of mine, an artist, who employed a little girl as model. One day this child spoke of the baby at her house. My friend enquired if it was a small boy or girl. The model said it wasn't either, it was just a baby. And my friend could get no other answer for a longish time. At last she asked what it was called, and when she heard its name was Tom she said that it must be a boy. The model asked if all the Toms were boys."

. . . . . .

It was only a short journey of an hour to Huntingdale, and when we got there Captain Jennings met us at the station. He was handsomer than when we last had seen him or perhaps it was the flannel suit he wore. I told him as we drove from the station that I liked it very much, and he was glad, he said, that I had noticed it, because it was a new one. He was also well content with it.

"But English people when they have their clothes, they keep them for themselves," my mother said. "Some years ago in Seville there was the Señora Dalebrook with a fine, new hat, a Paris hat; and I have heard that she was very angry when a Spanish woman asked her for it, so that she could copy it for her five daughters and herself."

"Is that so?" said Captain Jennings, who was clearly quite amused at the Señora Dalebrook.

"I should like to hear all sorts of things about

your life in London, but we'll soon be at the house and you might like to know about my sister. But do tell me just how you've been getting on."

So we told him we had not seen much, for I had mostly spent the time in practising the dance, or with my mother I had walked about the streets. We liked the shops, I said, extremely, and it was the same as Seville in so far as gentlemen, while we were gazing in at the shop windows——

"They do that in London? You surprise me," said the captain. "I thought they had left off years ago."

"Why should they leave off?" asked my mother. "Why indeed?"

"Well, I'm sure I don't know," said the captain. "I imagined men had stopped insulting ladies in that way."

"Insulting ladies!" said my mother. "I myself am not a lady, I am only someone who possessed a little grocer's shop. But still one hears things. I have heard about a place of entertainment—what it was I have forgotten—and they had two doors. One of them had on it that it was for ladies who were totally respectable, the second door that it was for the other kind. And what occurred? Those who were not respectable went in where it was for the good ones, and the good ones, on the other hand——"

"Here we are," said the captain suddenly,

"here is the house. Let us talk about something else, if you don't mind."

Three persons were all standing to receive us and what I first saw was the red face of one of them and the striped black and yellow waistcoat of a thin one. Further back a grave man was beside the open door.

"Ha! Ha!" exclaimed the big red-faced man. He had a yellowish moustache, and though he was so big and boisterous he gave one the impression of a child.

"My brother-in-law, Sir William Loseford," said the captain.

"Ha! Ha!" quoth Sir William very joyously.

Three dogs, as they plunged up and down between us, were making the same kind of noises as their master. Everyone was very happy.

Just as we were moving on into the house there came a lady out of the cool darkness of it.

"Ha! Ha!" cried Sir William, and he waved his hands about between us and his wife.

She—like her husband and her brother, very tall—was in a hurry. Later on I knew that she was always in a hurry. When she came to greet us and shook hands with us there was in her large hand no real grip; its flabby motion was as if the owner of it had passed on to something else and at the end of a long pole was reaching you a hand of wool. She had a hospitable and excited look upon her face, while she

pronounced some words which Captain Jennings told us were in French and which were words of welcome.

"Heavens! But she has the hair!" my mother said.

Captain Jennings laughed. It was indeed her beauty, for the countenance was too much like a horse.

We all began to move towards a room.

"If she would have the hair more tightly bound," my mother said, "it would be very fine indeed."

"It must be terrible for your ideas," said Captain Jennings, "but it always looks as if the hens had walked about on it." He told us that she had this great abundance from the cause that, when she was some twenty years of age, she had been desperately ill and every strand of hair had fallen from her head. When she recovered it all grew again and thus her present crop was younger, by those twenty years, than all the rest of her.

"The colour is like straw," my mother said. "And—and——." She was trying to continue, as we now were in the room, a room so spacious and with pillars in it, creamy pillars, that my mother lost her courage. She could feel it slipping and a voice within her said that she must try to talk, for save she could continue talking she would very soon have not a shred of courage left. The furniture was frightening her too, be-

cause each piece was far away from other pieces. So my mother looked—and almost wildly—at the head of Lady Loseford. But alas! she could not think of any other comment she could make about it. I myself was not so frightened, for I looked less at the room and more at these English people. Anyone could see that there was kindness in their hearts.

But I will confess that I was also rather agitated, seeing that a kind heart in the people who are with you is not everything. Except if you are very, very friendly it is irksome when you sit with anyone in silence; and although we could speak to the captain this made it more marked that we could not speak to his relatives. All that, you say, we should have thought about before we went to Huntingdale. We did think; but our journey had been forced on us by Mr. Wainwright.

In that vast room, while we had our tea and afterwards, it would have been quite tolerable if we had had our fans. We all of us in Andalucia can use a fan not only as a substitute for words, but also as the medium for thoughts you do not utter.

Captain Jennings was oppressed, he told us later on, because we were uneasy. He endeavoured by himself to carry on a conversation, and he had to do it by himself. So in the end he ceased. It was most dreadful. And when presently a dog came begging to Sir William he put

out his foot and kicked it. Lady Loseford was the first to break the silence; she said something rapidly to Captain Jennings, but he only answered with a sickly smile. If I had not been partly occupied in drinking tea and eating cake, then I for one would have begun to howl.

And then the Captain luckily remembered an event. He told us that an Englishman called Drinkwater had made a play on Cromwell. It was not a play with any plot, like those of our great Lope. The people nearly all the time had nothing else to do than show themselves upon the stage. But this would not have satisfied the audience, to see them there not saying anything, and so the author made them sing a lot of sacred songs and then repeat some writings of the poets. That was not a very perfect portrait of the Lord Protector; but as the Cromwell on the stage was not the man with lights and shadows, but a stupid whitewashed figure, it was rather creditable that it spoke at all. Among the actors there was only one who was permitted to come on the stage and be entirely quiet, for in the second scene his tongue had been torn out. He was the only one who was excused from singing psalms or chanting poetry or talking, talking, talking in the hope that you would say that there was real life in them.

"If there were a public looking at us five," said Captain Jennings, "we should simply have to

talk or sing. "It's a great pity when you don't happen to have anything to say."

He had spoken for so long that now my mother was in a more comfortable frame of mind. She looked around her and she smiled as one who was recovering from illness.

"Ha! Ha!" exclaimed Sir William, smiling back at her. Then he stood up, pulled down his waistcoat and asked Captain Jennings if it would amuse us to walk round the garden.

Such a garden we had never seen. The grass lay like a wondrous carpet—if I told them of it when I had returned to Seville they would not believe me. Further on were paths which led in all directions through the flowers. I am not one of those who can remember what the flowers are called and thus I know not if in this place there grew some that also blossom in our gardens of the Alcazar. But this I do know—I had never seen so many paths. It was as if a flock of giant spiders had constructed them, one spider being first engaged on it and then another after he was weary and another one and so on. They went curving this way, that way in a very complicated fashion. I said to Captain Jennings what I thought about the spiders, and he said that he for his part saw in them a multitude of guides, those men who in a foreign town, he said, attempt to drag you off; and here a number of them were all dragging at the same time, so that very probably the poor pedestrian would find his limbs part

company and going off in various directions. Now and then a path would run up towards some higher ground and then would turn and jump by means of a nice little bridge across another path.

"You see my sister striding over there?" said the captain. "Well, she's got a mania for making paths. And what she'll do when all the place is one huge path I can't conceive. She's beckoning to her husband and the odds are that she's going to get another one traced out."

We followed the large couple, Lady Loseford marching on and pointing sternly like a General in some old picture, while Sir William seemed to find it troublesome to walk so fast.

"Bueno," said my mother, "when we sleep we are all equal."

"May I ask what you mean?" said the captain.

She was by a pool of water in which yellow flowers were floating. "This," she said, "and that." She pointed to a rockery among which plants of every colour lived in separate compartments, while two little streams came splashing down the rocks between them. And she pointed at a long red wall on which some fruit trees stretched their branches out and very evenly, as if they had been soldiers doing exercises. And she pointed to the garden dipping down and rising up again, and to the fields beyond it and the smooth cows and the wonderful great brood-

ing trees with railings round them. "When I go to sleep," my mother said, "then I will dream that this is mine. . . . Dreams, dreams," she said, "and I wanted to talk to you about other matters."

By that pool there was a rustic seat, and Captain Jennings said our host and hostess would be unaware that we had stopped.

"What do you hold of this?" my mother said. "I thought my little one would have her portrait everywhere and that the newspapers would write——"

"But surely," said the captain, "I have seen——"

"That's nothing. I know they have said that Mr. Wainwright will present the loveliest of women very soon. Yet they have said it in a slightly mocking way, because of that advertisement without a face. He thought it was a good idea and I say one fool breeds a hundred."

"Without being an advertising specialist," said the captain, "I should at all events praise it for its originality, its imagination and its——"

"All the fault of that young man, that Borax," said my mother. "It is wrong, entirely wrong."

Then we were interrupted by a distant shout.

"I know what it is," the captain said. "Sir William wants to introduce us to his horses. He won't be happy till we've seen his horses. Shall we go?"

Then, as we hurried down some paths, my mother, who was rather irritated, said she could not understand why there should be two paths or more, all leading to the same spot. For an ordinary honest person, she remarked, it was confusing.

"I believe," the captain said, "that Borax rather prides himself on being able to cajole us by a new path to the same place as we were at before."

"But my Mariposa, she is something new, I think."

"Well yes, but he regards it as more subtle if one is led up to her circuitously. All the ancient dodges—interviews and paragraphs and so on—are played out. At least he thinks so, I am told. I hope he's right. He may be, he's a clever sort of fellow."

"And there is no wax that does not melt," my mother said. Her face was full of gloom.

"If he believed in the old methods," said the captain, "you would find your life a burden. People would be blowing in at your hotel to ask your daughter, and perhaps you too, what is your opinion of the tango and of the League of Nations and whether you consider Goya a good artist and what kind of soap you recommend."

By this time we had nearly overtaken the two others.

"There was one Goya who was a Spanish artist," said my mother.

"Aha!" said Sir William. He looked brightly at us, then turned round and we went after him towards the stables. Lady Loseford went ahead of us with such swift strides that by the time we got there she was in a stable handing bits of carrot to a horse. This lovely, gleaming animal was not chained up, like those two others who were in two stalls; and they turned round their heads.

"How beautiful they are and fat," my mother said.

Sir William spoke.

"He wants to know," the captain said, "which one you like the best."

"But what am I to say?" my mother said.

"There now," said the captain. "Now you see what an escape you've had from all those journalists. If they had come to ask about the League of Nations——"

"You are making fun of me," my mother said. She held herself a little stiffly. "Tell the gentleman, Mariposa, which in our opinion is the finest of these beasts."

I shook my head.

"Oh well," said my mother, "let it not be said that we are altogether ignorant. Make answer to Sir William, please, that I think this one would produce the most delicious steak that I have ever eaten. As for those two——"

But the captain was already giving the translation and "Alas!" my mother said, "they love that horse so much. They do not like to think of when he is no more."

Sir William and his wife were gaping at her with wide open eyes. A groom was so affected that he actually ran away out of the stable. And we others went back to the house, with Lady Loseford and Sir William talking merrily to one another. I said to my mother that I thought she had unhappily made a mistake and that these animals were not for eating but for driving in a carriage, just like those with which we two had driven in the park at Seville when prosperity first came to us.

. . . . . .

The more I was with Captain Jennings the more confidence I felt in him. While we were sitting by ourselves in the verandah after luncheon on the next day, the Sunday, I confessed that he reminded me of God.

As he lay back in the long chair of wickerwork and smoked, a broken ring came at this moment from his mouth. I watched it rise and spread itself.

"So that's that," said he. And after he had smoked a little more, so that his face became invisible, I looked more closely at his form than I had ever dared to do. And in my heart I said he was a monarch—there was something good and strong and wise and faithful every-

where about him, down to the brown boots. They were the boots of one who walks serenely. And his bosom, under the grey flannel suit which I had praised the day before, was such a bosom as you would be seeking in the time of tribulation. Those things were the causes why he made me think of God.

He went on smoking very hard and as he put his right hand up towards his cigarette it seemed to me as if this was a hand so delicate, so strong that there was nothing which it could not do. . . . From time to time I have these sentiments of admiration for a man. It might be better if I searched into these men more deeply, but it would not give me so much happiness.

"I wonder," said the captain, who was still behind that smoke. "I wonder——"

"Yes?" I said.

"Oh, nothing. . . ."

But I saw the first and second fingers of his hand go rubbing one against the other very quickly, like the hind legs of a grasshopper.

Then I addressed him. "You are wise," I said, "and kind, so that I have faith in you."

"I am so glad," he said, "more glad than I can say, because you make it easier for me, a little." He was looking at his boots and then at me and then again at his brown boots. "Now, do you think," he said, "you could perhaps—I am much older—but I really, I would do, I would do anything to make you happy——"

I leaned forward and I touched his trembling hand. "Oh, my dear friend," I said.

A harshness crept into his voice. "Is there no chance at all?" he said. "Perhaps I was a fool to ask you."

How I wished the poor man had not spoken words of love.

"But, my captain, did I ever make you think," said I, "that—that——?"

He nodded. "You are right," he said, "you never did encourage me."

Then he was silent for a time. I could not look at him. There were two sparrows on the little red wall at the end of the verandah. They were hopping gaily to and fro, each one delighted with the other.

"What a brute I am," he said, "feeling sorry for myself. It's you I should be sorry for—I make you suffer—having to say this to me is like a sword inside you."

"Oh, my dear, my dear," I whispered.

Thereupon he burst out: "But, Mariposa! Couldn't you? I'd keep all harm away from you. I'd never think of anything but you. Oh, if you could!"

I rose and sadly stood in front of him.

"If I had been more diplomatic! But no, it was fate," said he, with bitterness.

I stooped down, so as to kiss him on the forehead. And then I went back into my chair, while he, I thought, in his chair was a shrunken

figure. In a voice which I endeavoured to keep calm I said that if all this was fate, must we not bow to it?

"I was a fool," he said. "I'm not the sort of man you ought to marry."

I reflected for a time and presently I said that it was strange that he, a man like that, could like me. I would always think of him with gratitude.

He began to laugh, but broke it off. And I was glad when Lady Loseford came so breczily out of the house. She wanted us to join her in —no matter what, a walk, a drive, a weeding of the flower-beds, a visit to a former servant who lived in a cottage not far off. One should not waste an afternoon like this, she said. In England one did not require such long siestas as in Seville or Gibraltar. We were very lazy people, lying there. If everyone was like us two, she said in her high voice, the world would certainly come to a standstill.

Even if she had not come I would not now have asked the captain what I had intended to, which was if he thought Maisie Grantley would attempt to make off with Raimundo.

I said nothing, and as we got up there was such quiet cheerfulness about the captain that it seemed to me Gibraltar would remain for ever in their hands, although our papers say that it is temporarily with them. I felt that they would keep

it always and I would myself do nothing that would help to throw them out.

. . . . . .

Lady Loseford had already settled that we three should visit an old woman who had once been in her service and was now the inmate of a charming cottage. This old woman, more than eighty years of age, was nearly blind, so that a little girl, a neighbour's child, spent nearly all the day with her. This little girl could do the simple household tasks, but she could not make jellies or some other things which invalids and aged people like. So Lady Loseford used to have large quantities brought over. When we went that afternoon they were in a big basket which the captain found it difficult to carry. But he made a joke of it, saying that he trusted Mrs. Mason would invite him when with all these things she gave a dinner-party.

"That reminds me," said Lady Loseford. "I'll give her that brown dress of mine."

"If it's not too *décolleté*," said the captain.

"It will only need a little alteration," said his sister, "scarcely anything at all."

"It wouldn't do then," said the captain, "for a lady in America whom I was reading of. She came to a party where there was a priest among the guests, a celebrated witty priest. And as the dress was cut extremely low the hostess thought it would offend the priest and that she ought to make him her apologies. 'Don't men-

tion it,' said he. 'You know I was a missionary once.' "

As a rule, I noticed, Captain Jennings never was the first to laugh at his own tales; this time he did so on account of what had happened. And when Lady Loseford and myself were in the tiny sitting-room of Mrs. Mason's cottage, we could hear a number of amusing observations made by Captain Jennings in the kitchen, while he helped the little girl to take the dainties from the basket.

Lady Loseford's conduct was extraordinary. She strode up to the old woman, who was sitting in a high chair by the fire-place, though there naturally was on that warm summer afternoon no fire in it. As we entered she sat there in thought and with a look of melancholy on her furrowed little face. How curious it is that those who give much time to thinking are so often full of sadness.

Lady Loseford marched then up to where the poor old woman sat. She reached her side as she was near the point of starting to get up to make the curtsey of politeness.

"Here we are! Sit still. I hope you're flourishing. This is a young lady from Spain. I've brought you a few things to eat. How is your appetite? Is everything all right?" said Lady Loseford.

"Thank you very much, my lady. Very kind of you, I'm sure," said the old woman. From

her face the furrows were evaporating and she sat there vaguely happy, like a child before the curtain of a theatre goes up. How wonderfully are we turned to little children in the presence of those blessed people who have not grown old.

Lady Loseford waved me to a chair, the one that with a red and green wool cushion fastened to its back stood opposite the chair of Mrs. Mason. This had been the chair of her late husband, I was afterwards informed by Captain Jennings. Now and then the captain came in from the kitchen and deposited some dish upon the table of the sitting-room. He overheard with ease the conversation of those two. But when his sister took a small book from a shelf of crockery, sat down beside the table, drew out her lorgnette, held it to her eyes with one hand, held the book up with the other and began to read, to read as fast as if her life depended on it, then her brother, as he likewise told me afterwards, could scarcely understand a word. But he was anyhow more fortunate than Mrs. Mason. It was obvious that as the sentences came with appalling speed from Lady Loseford's lips—and with no stops between the sentences and never any variations in the voice —that it was passing like a sunbeam over the old woman's head, just as tenuous and just as comforting. She sat there with a beatific smile. And Lady Loseford went on very zealously, not

pausing for a moment and not even seeming to take breath.

This gave me an opportunity to look at Mrs. Mason's room—there was a china figure which Lady Loseford had pushed away from the center of the table, to give herself more room; it was the figure of a girl dressed as a shepherdess, but gazing at a young man more than at her sheep. I thought perhaps the other figure had been broken when they both were up at Lady Loseford's house. All round the little room were ornaments of coloured glass and shells, especially two shells at each end of the mantel-piece. Between them were some photographs, not very pretty ones, and in the middle of the mantel-piece a sort of picture made of wings, all kinds of birds' wings just as brilliant as butterflies. They must have come from far away —those islands in the ocean, I had read about them once or twice—the brown men—would I ever see them?—lying underneath a palm, like ours in Seville—lying there and singing to you—and the sea of turquoise and the golden sands—the waves that fall in music on the shore——

I closed my eyes—the music on the shore—it was as if I heard it—evenly, so evenly it fell—and spoke of many mysteries—and spoke—it was the voice of Lady Loseford. She was still continuing to read that book, which was the translation of a novel by George Sand. Sud-

denly she stopped, I know not whether it was in the middle or the end of a sentence or a chapter. When she came again she would go on precisely from that place, and Mrs. Mason, who would have the very haziest recollection of the story, would be just as interested if she started there as if she started at another point. Now and then I have myself found books like that when you meet people who are flesh and blood, not marionettes who are performing a long tale which you must know from the beginning.

"It's been very nice," said Lady Loseford, as she placed the book upon the shelf.

"Very nice indeed," said Mrs. Mason.

"There, there, and your health's all right? I'm so glad. I'll be looking in to-morrow or the next day."

"And is Sir William keeping well, my lady?"

"Oh, yes. Now we must be off. This lady comes from Spain, I think I told you."

"Yes, my lady, thank you."

Captain Jennings had the empty basket on his arm and, as we were leaving, Mrs. Mason thanked him. "But we haven't had much talk to-day, sir, have we? You'll be coming in again, I hope, another day."

"Of course I will," the captain said. "By the way I am just going to take down that horseshoe you've got outside the door. You've got it hung up the wrong way, you know."

"Oh, has she?" said Lady Loseford.

"And now you'll have good luck, I hope," the captain said. "I'll hang it round the other way."

"That *will* be fine. I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you, sir," the old woman said.

He put the basket down and vanished.

"He's gone to do it now," said Lady Loseford. "I suppose he won't be long. It's getting late. And—what's her name?—Susan. I hope you're pleased with her."

"She's a very good girl indeed, my lady, thank you."

"Susan, come in here," called Lady Loseford.

And when the small girl with such flaming cheeks appeared and tried to smile, she was inspected searchingly and swiftly through the lorgnette.

"Got it fixed up all right!" exclaimed the captain from outside the house.

"He's done your horse-shoe. We'll be going now," said Lady Loseford.

"Yes, my lady. Will you tell the captain——"

"Oh, that's all right. I'll tell him. And you're all right, you say? I'll send you some beef-tea to-morrow, if I can't come in myself. Good-bye, good-bye."

As were were walking back, we three, my mind was taken up with what awaited me in London. Would the Grantley try to be avenged, would she enroll some others in a fight against me? Who were my friends? Mr. Wainwright, Mr. Borax

and perhaps Mr. Augustus Drake, the masterful stage-manager. If only I could feel more certain of Raimundo!

Meanwhile, they were talking, Captain Jennings and his sister, and he told me that it was about our train to town. Lady Loseford, so he said with twinkling eyes, was fond of having everything in order. It had happened more than once that walking in the garden she had met some guests who were arriving, and before they could get down she had enquired at what time on the Monday it would suit them to go back. Those who knew her knew that she was greatly hospitable, but a new acquaintance was inclined to go back there and then.

As he was telling me all this we dropped behind and Lady Loseford did not wait for us.

"She asks old Mrs. Mason how she is," the captain said, "and never stops for a reply. It isn't that she doesn't care. She cares too much and doesn't want to hear that she has any ailments."

I wondered if that woman who went hurrying through life and pouring balsam on the wounds of those she met, sat down sometimes in mournful contemplation of her own wounds. As she strode in front of us into the calm of that late afternoon, it seemed as if she always would refuse to look. Or was she exempt from the most piercing wounds, the wounds that men and

women give each other? And we that are made of frailer stuff, do we succumb too easily? In letting love, its woes and joys, be the chief business of our life perhaps we show a lack of wisdom. Oh, if I could put away for evermore my thoughts about Raimundo, Miguel and several other men. But if I did, what would become of me? If one is made like that how can one change? And would it not be irreligious for a girl to try to change herself from what God made her?

"Has the blindness of old Mrs. Mason made you sad? I think her sight is getting worse," said Captain Jennings.

Always, always, one is egotistic; but I really felt a shame to think that I was only speculating as to whether I was very blind. Did I ignore large tracts of splendid life?

"But after all," said Captain Jennings, "she is happy. She has everything she wants. . . . What do you say?"

Those ancient trees so full of kindliness, the meadows in which every white and yellow flower was a little happy laugh—why could I not be happy too?

The meadows rolled up into a dim range of hills. They called me—this was the long road which had been trodden by the young adventurers, by those who could not stay in the four walls, but passionately pressing on made for the

region over there, pressing on, despite their loneliness and weariness, towards the things that are unknown, passing on so eagerly to solve this everlasting problem, and themselves are now a part of the unknown.

CHAPTER VIII

JUST as we were getting up from breakfast the next morning Lady Loseford said that we would find a red book on a table in the hall. It was the book in which you signed your name, and we must not forget. When the captain told us what she said he spoke in a quite ordinary way, as if he did not know of my dear mother, that she could not write. Or was it possible he did not know? And Lady Loseford was very glad, she said, to have two Spanish names, because in all the book there was not one. What could I do? It was impossible to tell them that my mother's hand was out of order; they had seen her use it during breakfast. And it was impossible to hope that Lady Loseford would forget; she was not that kind of woman.

"My brother-in-law," said Captain Jennings, as we passed into the hall—a place that really was a sitting-room, with cosy chairs, a sofa and three tables, on which there were flowering plants and cigarettes and illustrated magazines and ink and notepaper and that red book—"my brother-in-law," the captain said, "is sorry about all this business in Morocco. He is fond of Spain—when he came out last year to see me he

was able to get in some hunting in the Algeciras country. Ever since that he has liked the Spaniards, so he says, and this defeat down there distresses him. There's a long tale about it in this morning's paper."

That, I thought, would save us if I could persuade him into giving us an accurate translation. It might take so long that there would just be time to rush into the motor-car and race down to the station.

My dear mother had forgotten, I could see, about the book, for as she knew she could not sign she had dismissed it from her thoughts. And she was actually strolling through the hall to take a little last walk in the garden. One more moment and she would have passed the table where the book lay; and Lady Loseford, who was on the point of going up the stairs, would have invited her to write.

"Dear one!" I exclaimed in anguish, "please come over here without delay, and Captain Jennings"—I looked pleadingly at him—"will read us out this awful tale."

"This tale about the military operations in Morocco," said the captain. "But, you know, unless you're very keen I'd sooner be excused, because the details are abominable."

"But we are so keen," I said, "we really are."

My mother shrugged her shoulders. "I know very well," she said, "about Morocco. One day

I was talking to Don Carlos, our good priest, and just like you he had a newspaper. It wrote about those savage people, and he said one ought to bring them to the faith. I said——"

She broke off there, for Lady Loseford hustled back into the hall, and going to the book had the intention, I could see, of giving it to her.

So I violently beckoned to my mother and she came to where I was upon the sofa. "Will you please explain to Lady Loseford," said I to the captain, "that we are so troubled—our poor countrymen—and we will put our names in presently."

He told his sister and she laid the book down on another table. Then she disappeared again.

"I told Don Carlos all about those demons," said my mother.

"If this telegram does not exaggerate that is the proper word for them," said Captain Jennings.

"Well, I told him what I thought. 'Bring them into the faith,' I said, 'and will they not be just as bad?' He thereupon replied that I myself had not sufficient faith, although the truth is that I have."

The captain took his watch out. Oh, but I was glad the time was drawing near when we would have to rush away. And thus they would not know that secret. I believe that both of

us had acted very well throughout these days, and the mistakes we made—for some we must have made—were, I am sure, regarded as the ways of Andalucians. But they would think it was disgraceful, even for an Andalucian, not to write.

My mother, as she spoke, came and sat down beside me on the sofa. "Then I told him," she continued, smiling pleasantly, "I told him I had so much faith that I could give them some of mine. But he, what do you think he said? 'They are the most generous of all,' said he, 'who have the least.' 'You mean,' said I, 'that I possess no faith?' "

"At all events," said Captain Jennings, "you possess a memory I must admire."

She threw her fingers out. "But he replied," she said, "that he had spoken hurriedly. He sometimes is a man like that. I am so glad when he comes walking down the street. Immediately I clean a chair and get it ready and——"

"Excuse me," said the captain, "do you want to hear about this business in Morocco?"

"Oh, yes, surely. It will please me very much," she said. "Now I am listening." She sat with folded hands.

And Captain Jennings started to translate. It was a truly fearful tale of our beloved army. They had found themselves encircled in the mountains by a foe that was equipped with every-

thing—guns, ammunition, aeroplanes—while they had nothing left, not even water. And the foe was merciless. The newspaper related how so many thousands of our troops were massacred. And other thousands stayed as prisoners. It was most horrible to hear. They had cut out the eyes of some of them and made a dish of it——

I clutched my mother by the hand, as if I wanted her to save me in a world of savages.

"You hurt me!" said my mother. "What is this?"

I scarcely knew that I had seized her hand, but now I saw the plan before me. "Then you cannot write," I said.

She stared at me. "You know," she said, "you know quite well I cannot write."

The captain looked up from his newspaper. "Dear me," he said, "why do you do it then? As if these horrors were infectious! I won't read about them any more."

"You have read enough," I said.

He folded up the paper and I asked him for that book, to write in it. And as it lay upon my knee, I felt immeasurably glad that I had learned to write, because it would have been impossible for me to hurt my own hand also. We should have been in much the same position as the gallant Spanish army, stricken with disaster.

Lady Loseford and Sir William came into the

hall as I was slowly writing. Slowly—for I felt as would the Spanish General on the battlefield when he had been victorious—he would not wish to ride away before he had made certain that the fateful scene was in his memory and also not before he had knelt down in thanksgiving to God. That is how I felt.

Lady Loseford must have thought my mother had already signed her name, for she—not uttering a word about the book—said that she hoped we had enjoyed ourselves.

Captain Jennings said that he would drive down with us to the station. . . .

When we were some distance down the drive and I looked back again Sir William was still standing at the door. He waved his hand and, though I could not hear him, I am sure he said "Ha! Ha!" And in my breast I said it too. The wheels were singing it, the branches of the trees were singing it; and when we reached the station I could have gone dancing with a porter down the platform.

"You are in fine spirits this morning," said Captain Jennings a little sadly.

"My dear, good friend," I said, "do not think ill of me. What am I but a little dancing-girl from Seville? I am nothing."

For a moment he did not know what to say and then in rather a dull, heavy tone he said that I would always be for him a sacred

memory. If he ever could do anything to serve me——

"You can do it now at once," I said, "by being cheerful. You were cheerful yesterday," I said, "when—when——"

"I had to be," he answered, "or I should have broken down. But I will never speak about these things again."

Soon after this our train came in. We took our seats and I leaned from the window and I kissed the captain.

"Oh!—I'll get a newspaper," he said, "an illustrated one. Perhaps they'll have your picture in it."

But there was no picture of me, as we found on hunting through the paper when the train was moving.

"Furthermore," my mother said, "why did you hurt my hand like that? It was barbarity. And now you laugh about it. Are you mad?"

I flung my arms around her and I told her how it had all come to pass.

"Ah, well," she sighed, when I had done, "perhaps I will disgrace you and our country. It is sad indeed. What can I do? Shall I go back again?"

I told her that if she went I would go. In fact we were most friendly, sitting in that carriage hand in hand. A gentleman of middle age was sitting in the corner with his newspaper

held up in front of him. He had paid no attention to us whatsoever. But I had to think of him because of an idea which now my mother had.

"It was very fortunate," said she, "that I was not so angry as to beat you when you hurt my hand. If I had not been so surprised I should have turned you over on that sofa and—then indeed it would have brought disgrace upon us, for those English people never would have understood that I have always done it."

"And will always do it, God be thanked," I said. "When it descends on me, your hand, I am a little girl again—those happy days—the Alameda de Hércules, the dust, the games we played in it—how we enjoyed to make ourselves look terrible with moistened dust—and how we moistened it!—upon our faces. We were a wild Indian horde. And then you would perceive me and would drag me in and lay me on your knee."

"What happened then, you can't say you enjoyed it," said my mother.

"Ten minutes afterwards," I said, "it seemed to me far better that I was not a wild Indian roaring through the world, but somebody with a strong mother to look after me. And later on, as I was growing up and you chastised me now and then—it sounds ridiculous that such a thing could give me joy, but when the other girls said that their mothers did not strike them any

more I answered that you came out of a village and maintained the customs of our ancestors. It made me proud."

Just then we went beside a vast and rolling park in which the trees were the most glorious that I had ever seen. I said I wished the train would stop a little, for I wanted to remember this so that I afterwards could live in it, as well as I lived always in the days long dead whenever she inflicted blows upon my body. I was in a mood of sentiment, and if she would chastise me, just a little——

"Do you want me to?" she said.

But then that Englishman, there in his corner —if by chance, despite the noise the train was making, he could hear my mother beating me, what would he say? "It is a pity we are not alone," I said.

"And you prefer that I should stay with you in England?" said my mother.

"Do you think," I said, "that I could live without you?"

. . . . . .

At the Worcestershire Hotel we found some parcels and three letters and a man. The shortest letter was from Mr. Wainwright, saying that he was despatching certain dresses and an expert who would make the necessary alterations after he had seen them on me. He was one of the best men available, said Mr. Wainwright. He was quite an artist. When I looked more

closely at the man, who had been standing near the parcels while I read this letter in the hall, I thought he was a very serious companion. As I looked at him he gravely bowed, so that I saw how thin his hair was. It was rather silly hair —I should have liked—and just because he was so serious—to run my fingers through it. Otherwise I noticed nothing of much moment in his face or figure. He was quite an ordinary fellow, not repulsive and not beautiful. There was no laughter in his eyes; and what the colour of his eye was I could not have told you. After all, though, said I to myself, an artist need not scream it at you by his countenance or costume that he is an artist. One day in the theatre Raimundo had presented to me a musician, said to be one of the very best among the intellectual composers of the country. But, alas! his evening waistcoat was a grey one and his black tie was more like a sash. I do not say that the effect was ugly; I turned away from it because for a great artist it was pitiful. Another gentleman with yellow hair I met in England—but this only happened afterwards—would always come into the theatre with just as huge a tie and with a golden-headed stick. But this man was no artist sent by God; I heard that in his head there was not much more than inside the stick's head, so that one did not regard the spectacle with sadness but with merriment.

As I was looking at the inconspicuous artist

in the hall of the hotel—the only feature which he had uncommon was a chin of more than average size—my mother asked me who he was.

"Pardon me," the artist said, "but I understand your language."

"That is excellent indeed," said my mother. "To tell you the truth I thought that you looked like a kind of schoolmaster."

"Ah no," he said gravely. "Why I learned the language was because my employers sent me to South America. It is more convenient for those ladies than to go to Paris. So I took some lessons before I went, as a matter of fact from an elderly German—he had lived out there—and the rest of it, though I don't speak it very well, I learned on the spot. Excuse me for talking about myself. I have come to try on the young lady's costumes. Mr. Wainwright thought she would prefer it if I waited on her here?"

"*Pues,* we will take the lift," my mother said.

With us three people in it and the porter Barnfield and those parcels it did not move very quickly. Barnfield and our new acquaintance passed the time in talk, the end of which was that the serious dressmaker was laughing. I do not know how their conversation went, but why he laughed was on account of something Barnfield told him of a lady on the top floor one night when the Zeppelins were over London.

She was an old lady, nearly blind, and when the other guests knocked at her door and said the lift was waiting for her, she could not make up her mind if it was safer to go down or to remain. So when she came out of the room she locked the door, in order that her maid, who was inside, should without any interruption gaze into the crystal until Bouvrie put in his appearance. Bouvrie was the lady's Indian guide—and he would say if she must go downstairs or not. Her friends explained to her that Barnfield could not wait indefinitely with the lift, but even as they spoke a trembling voice came through the door to say that Bouvrie thought it was much better if they all went down into the basement.

While the gentleman was telling us all this we had been going to my room. The parcels and the luggage were brought in by Barnfield. Then the dressmaker knelt down so that he could undo the parcels and he begged me not to wait with those two letters in my hand—I had forgotten them. A very nice one was from Miguel. He said how much he missed me and that he had won applause at a big bull-fight; he would do his best to be promoted quickly, so that we could live with good surroundings, and he hoped that I was well and having great successes and that I would write to him. The other letter was from dear Raimundo. It consisted of two little lines, in which he asked me to accept a box of chocolates —a splendid box of them was in those parcels

—and he signed himself: "My friend, I am your faithful servant." Of that woman, Maisie Grantley, he said not a word.

The dressmaker was taking out the clothes and laying them on chairs. But they were beautiful. I ran about and clapped my hands. There was a shawl with orange-coloured poppies over it. The shawl itself was black. I never had seen anything so marvellous in Seville, for it had long fringes, like a horse's mane. To have it round myself, a shawl like that!

"I am very glad to see," said the dressmaker, "that it meets with your approval. From what Mr. Wainwright told me I had gathered that your dance is altogether different from the tango in the Argentine. I saw that once." He shuddered. "And, if I may say so," he resumed, "now that I have seen you I am sure that your dance will be absolutely on another plane." The man was very much in earnest. Then he smiled a little at the shawl and said, "I think the colour-scheme will be exceedingly appropriate."

I passed on to another chair, across which he had hung some black lace and some orange stockings.

"It depends," he said, "on your complexion, and, of course, the lighting. We shall have to try it on the stage to see which stockings are the best. I thought it over very carefully, but we must leave this matter over until then, I think."

"But," I said, "you are the perfect artist."

He bowed a little stiffly. "Thank you very much," he said. "We thought this skirt with the two flounces," he continued, "would go rather well with all the rest."

It was black lace and so exquisite—my heart was throbbing.

"Tell me," said my mother to the grave man, "do you know the custom here? Will these things be our property to take away with us?"

"Oh, if you care to take them, naturally they are yours," he said. "I am very gratified that they appeal to you."

I closed my eyes. One thing alone was lacking now—that I should learn to dance so well that they would let me dance in the chief halls of Seville. Black and gold, this lovely dress. And everything was black and gold before me—dismal failure and bewildering success. They floated in and out of one another. What would come to me? Would I stretch out my hands and grasp the gold? I felt as if between great gold and black balloons I was a leaf—a wind was whirling us all round and round—and on to what balloon would I be blown?

From this reverie I was awakened by my mother. "He has gone out of the room, that man," she said. "Now put the dress on, so that he can look at it."

But when I put on all those splendid things I was half dreaming.

"I can drink your thoughts," my mother said. "May all go well with you."

And when I had the dress on and that shawl of shawls, I sat upon the bed and I was looking at the shoes, black satin shoes with buckles in the shape of golden butterflies.

My mother called out to the man that I was ready and, as he came in, he stood there blushing. It was very strange.

"Have I not put it on the proper way?" I asked, and I looked everywhere I could.

"Oh, no, no," said the man. "But—will you put your shoes on? I am sorry."

What had happened to him while he had been waiting in the corridor? He was completely changed. It baffled me how such a calm and ordinary man could be transformed to this extent. His mouth and his whole face were twitching. Had there been some tragedy, a silent tragedy, out in the corridor. He did not look as if he could have answered me if I had asked him.

"Mariposa," said my mother, "do you hear the gentleman? Put on your shoes."

. . . . . .

It may be that if Luke Partington had not behaved in this odd fashion I would not have thought about him very much. At any rate he would have soon been thrust aside out of my memory. But it was just as if I had been plunged down from the surface of a placid sea into mys-

terious, dark depths; and I was fascinated by this man, much more than I had hitherto been fascinated by the other men.

While we were trying on the clothes he very quickly got his self-possession back. He said that we would only judge how these things fell on me; the way in which they were affected by the lighting, and the way in which they harmonized with what my dancing-partner would be wearing and with the suggested colours of the scenery—all that, he said, we would examine at the theatre.

I said that I had always thought that one man fitted on your dresses and another man designed them; but it seemed that he preferred to do it all himself. While he was studying the details and the whole effect on me he was so concentrated on it that my mother and myself said scarcely anything. And he worked on and on.

At last he said that he was satisfied and that he would take back the dress and make some alterations. So he left the room again and, after I had quickly changed into my other dress, the man returned in order to pack up the things.

"I hope," said he, while he was doing this and while I was myself preparing to drive down to the Excelsior, "I hope for something really good. It promises quite well, I think."

"How fortunate for me," said I, "that you are

not in South America. What trouble you have taken!"

"One can never take too much," said Mr. Partington. "This afternoon I shall drop in at the Museum, the British Museum. The officials are the most obliging people in the world. I shall go to see some etchings there by one of your great artists. By the way, if either of you have a wish I shall be only too pleased——"

"Assuredly," my mother said, "I have a wish, but it does not concern the dress. I should be very glad to know if people who fit on a dress in England always leave the room when it is being taken off."

But why did she desire to know? When I saw how the poor man had received her question I wished very heartily that she had never uttered it.

"We stand here wasting all the time," I said. "I want to get to the Excelsior before they all go out to lunch."

"Well, I must go too," said our friend.

And when I asked if I could take him in my taxi, he said yes that it could leave him on the way. And so we left. My mother did not want to come with me.

But in the taxi, after we had driven for a time, he looked so embarrassed that I thought that he was on the point of imitating Captain Jennings. And I was not sure that he would be as kind as Captain Jennings after I had said I could not

marry him. This man had hidden depths, as I had seen. He might resolve to run away and never see me any more. To lose a dressmaker of this calibre would be fearful. I determined that it must not be.

Therefore, having prayed a moment to the Blessed Virgin that she would protect and guide me, I addressed myself to Mr. Partington.

"Dear Mr. Partington, why should we not be friends?" I said.

He did not answer me at once and as I was most anxious I began to stroke his hand.

"But," said he, "my dear young lady——"

"Is it not sufficient to be friends?" I said.

He swallowed once or twice and then he said that I must be forgetting.

"No," I answered, "on the contrary."

"You have forgotten," he went on, "that I am your dressmaker."

"But why," said I, "should that prevent . . .? How sad it is," I said, "that these misunderstandings happen. You may say that I am very young—ah yes, but I have had experience."

"I see," he said.

I told him how it was most difficult to be a girl like me.

"Of course, of course," he said—his voice was full of sympathy—"but I do trust that the experience you talk of has not been a painful one."

I said that I would tell him all about it, how

an Englishman, a friend of mine, who was so nice, had made it awkward by requesting me to marry him, just as he was about to do himself.

At this he looked at me most strangely.

"Shall we then be friends?" I said.

"I hope we will," said he.

"And talk about all kinds of other things," said I.

"Well, as a matter of fact," said Mr. Partington, "there is a certain thing that I should like to mention. When I came into your room, just now, and was so—well, so clumsy, you must have imagined I was off my head. The fact is—I don't want to bother you about myself and especially as it is rather ludicrous—but I was brought up in an atmosphere of such a kind—I'm a Nonconformist—I will tell you afterwards what that is—and I can't escape from it. I try to change myself, but I believe I never shall. The slightest thing and up comes this old Noncomformist in me."

"So that," I said, "is a kind of evil spirit?"

"Good gracious, do you know," said he, "what an evil spirit is?"

And I admitted that my mother had a greater knowledge of them.

"Once I met a man on board a ship," said he, "who had been in Sumatra, and he reached a village—all the houses are on poles because of the wild animals—a village where they told him

that a little girl had got the evil spirit. So he climbed up by a sort of ladder—but I don't think it interests you."

"Oh, please go on," I said. I was so glad that he, at any rate, was interested.

"All right," said he. "And when the man arrived up there he found the little girl with all her relatives in a wide circle around her, hand in hand, their object being to surround the evil spirit which was in her. It was just a fever that she had and so he sent those people packing, all except the mother and the grandmother. He gave her some quinine. They say in that part of the world that evil spirits don't go by the main roads, only by the side tracks, and before these merge into the roads the natives plant two poles quite close together, which prevents the evil spirit passing through them. At the top of one there is a basket full of glowing embers and this hurts the evil spirit, so that he goes back; but so that he shall not be filled with animus against the village there is a nice basket on the pole with fruit in it."

The telling of this tale had had such good effect on Mr. Partington that I was careful not to ask him how, in spite of the two baskets on their poles, the evil spirit made its way into the little girl. And when the taxi stopped at the stage-door we separated as if we had been on terms of friendship for a long time.

The fatherly personage who dwelt in the little

office inside the stage-door gave me a smile that made me feel that I had been received into the family of British drama. He held up his hand to stop me running up the stairs, and as I put my elbows on the small, high counter at his window he produced a little pile of letters. And he had suspended in his office Mr. Borax's peculiar advertisement of me without the face. The printers must have sent it while I was away at Lady Loseford's house.

I was so eager to get back into my dressing-room, my own dear room, that as I scurried up the stairs I came into a collision with a man I slightly knew, a corpulent mechanic who, in shirt sleeves and a bowler hat, was walking with deliberation down the stairs. He was not pleased, but when as I passed on I patted him upon the shoulder—for I felt like that—he gurgled pleasantly.

And in my room—oh joy!—there knelt Raimundo hard at work on one of the two altars. I was rather out of breath and as I sank down on a chair I think I only made some incoherent sounds.

Raimundo did not rise. He went on hammering a piece of wood into its place, but he was evidently very glad to see me. He had made considerable progress with that altar. But when he observed that I had got those letters he rose up to help me read them.

"So you're back," he said, "in all the giddy whirl. Hope you had a jolly time down there."

As I was answering he opened the first letter and, because it was in English, asked if he should read it me. But when he read it to himself he laughed so much that I could not help laughing too, before I had the slightest knowledge of the contents. Then he told me it was from a firm of florists who solicited my patronage.

"The other day I was in there," Raimundo said, "and saw a very fine bouquet for Lady Philip, who is the widow of an actor. She has such a pretty girlish figure and is so angelically dressed——"

"But how you talk," I said. "As if anyone could go about dressed as an angel."

"They would not attract more attention than this lady does. The contrast with her face is very painful. You imagine when you look at her that she is wearing two white masks, one on the other—being both the tragic and the comic actor. She has got a nose that is all impudence and there are crows' feet crawling over the white surface everywhere and a perpetual grimace. But let us talk of something else."

"Why did we begin to talk of her?" I said.

"Oh yes, those flowers. The people in the shop said that she always ordered the bouquets to be delivered to herself, as if they came from some admirer. It's as nauseating as the books a certain woman-writer in this country who can't

write a little bit does on the subject of the Mormons."

"Poor Raimundo, you must have some air," I said, as I went over to the window.

"Let us leave those other letters till this afternoon," said he, "and go out now to lunch. There is no matinée, so Mr. Drake would like to see us do our dance upon the little stage. The other properties are not quite ready, but the stage is built and the conductor has composed a medley of all kinds of Spanish music. Anything that you don't like, he says, can be omitted. What delights him most of all is that he has entitled it *An Olla Podrida of Memories.* He told me he had used the same expression years ago, but no one would remember and it was so splendidly appropriate, considering that you are Spanish, that he quite hoped one of those tremendous fellows who write articles on music would bestow a special compliment on him. Now let's be off."

CHAPTER IX

RAIMUNDO wanted our performance to be one of the sensations of the season. So we gave ourselves the greatest pains to fashion something that would be magnificent; we strove to make it dignified, while not abandoning the amorous suggestions. It was to appeal by reason of its strangeness and by reason also of the universal passages which it would have in common with the audience. We were ambitious, for we hoped to please not only such as are attracted to a work of art because it happens to be novel, but those people likewise who are fond of it because it is as ancient as the human race. And we must also try, Raimundo said, to charm those people who can see what things are beautiful. We therefore had to give ourselves the greatest trouble. Every day we spent an hour or two in strenuous rehearsal, sometimes in that room where the piano was and sometimes on the stage.

Meanwhile Raimundo helped me so well with the altars that we finished these a week before I would require them. Naturally they did not compete with altars in a church, but I was told by several people that they were quite good ex-

amples of the primitive school. In the center of one of them we placed a wooden statue of the Virgin, which Raimundo bought for me. He said there should be missionaries who would stop this kind of thing, because the colours cried to Heaven. But I did not understand. Of course a blessed one must cry to Heaven and I thought this figure was both nice and amiable.

When I was asking him to give me for the other altar his own photograph, Raimundo for a long time—two days—three days—would not do so.

"My dear girl," he said, "when folks come up and see it——"

"The Grantley woman," I began, "——"

"No, everyone," said he. "They'd laugh themselves half sore. If you are anybody of position you must have your enemies, at all events the people who are jealous. They would simply snatch this opportunity with both hands, I can tell you." His round eyes were nearly falling out.

I made a special effort to be very calm, although I really was as much excited as Raimundo. It would be a dreadful thing if he would not allow me to put up his photograph. "My friend," I said, "if some of those pernicious people laugh—but who has ever heard of anybody laughing at an altar?—I will lead them to one side and make it plain to them that when I kneel before this altar I am saying

prayers to you, just as one does to any saint——"

"But I am not a saint," Raimundo said.

"For me you are much more," said I, "and I should entreat your intercession. Surely if a person laughs at that he must be wicked."

"Yes, but even if you could explain to some of them," he said, "what of the newspapers? We two are people of a certain prominence, at any rate you will be; and those illustrated papers, I can see them gloating over such a chance. All very well for you, as you're a Roman Catholic from Spain. They make allowances for that."

"How kind of them," I said, for I was beginning to be angry.

Raimundo was about to speak, but said it would be better if we changed the subject.

I made no reply.

It came to pass that on the next day we were both at work again upon that altar. He was carving little decorations with a chisel, I was painting stars into a sky that was the background for the holy one or him whose altar this was going to be. There was between us a constraint, caused by the subject we were both avoiding.

But Raimundo tried to make some conversation. "Have you heard about that Irish poet in New York?" he asked. "The bedrooms of our hotels have got a kind of shelf, a small cupboard, which is for your dirty boots. It is safer

than if they are put outside the door. This Irishman converted his receptacle into a shrine, the sort of thing that we are doing. Have you heard of him?"

"No, I have never heard of him," said I.

And presently Raimundo made another effort. "Those little cupboards are a pretty good idea," he said. "One doesn't lose one's boots so easily."

"If they were lost," I said, "then one could dedicate the shrine to St. Anthony of Padua."

"What would be the good of it?" said he.

"Now, for the love of God, Raimundo, tell me this," I said. "Do you believe that all those things have no importance."

"How can I tell? Ask me something else," he said.

To hear him talk like that! "Raimundo, my dear friend," I said, most earnestly, "is there a single thing on earth which is of more importance?"

"Oh, well, have it your own way," he said.

"And I have thought of this," said I. "If you don't want them to perceive your photograph upon the altar, we can have it in a envelope, sealed up. Will you agree to that?"

"If somebody should write upon it: 'To the Unknown God!' But never mind."

"Who," I said, "will dare to write a word? How glad I am that we have settled this about the photograph."

. . . . . .

One afternoon we had a final, great rehearsal in our costumes and with all the people who would represent the Spanish audience. My mother was among the row of women who were knitting or else dozing, poor old women. Everything was well arranged, the tables with the customers in Spanish dresses too and the good guitarist and the persons who would sit behind us in a semi-circle on the little stage, exclaiming *"Anda! Hombre! Anda!"* to encourage us. Augustus Drake was in the stalls and he was paying great attention to the lights. He made the operators change them half a score of times, so that the shadows fell in certain ways, and it was all most excellent.

By the side of Mr. Drake there sat the dressmaker, Luke Partington. Those two would now and then consult each other and the end of it would usually be that Partington wrote something in a tiny book. These were, as I learned afterwards, instructions for the people who worked under him. The only dress which Mr. Partington had made himself was mine.

As for the dance, while we were executing it we were occasionally interrupted by applause and at the end they crowded round us with congratulations. Mr. Wainwright had been flitting up and down, between the stalls, the stage-box and the stage. As he came trotting up to us he absolutely beamed through his big spectacles. He said that this would be the talk of London.

We had worked it out most cleverly; he never had been privileged to see a dance in which the two performers were in such a perfect understanding. Everybody else who spoke was equally enthusiastic. And I felt, surrounded by this praise, I felt as if a cloud of smoke were rising round me. Voices, faces—and a veil in front of them. Moreover I was moved so deeply that the tears came up into my eyes. And then I only caught from time to time a glimpse of someone I could recognise. For instance, I saw many people had surrounded my dear mother and were shaking hands with her.

. . . . . .

Raimundo having to remain at the Excelsior, my mother and myself went out into the street with Mr. Partington.. It was a splendid fine evening—an evening I longed to have for ever—and I said that I, at all events, would walk.

"These are the finest people in the world," I said. One does sometimes say things like that and I was filled with joyousness. The beaming eyes of Mr. Wainwright and the exclamations of those other folk had kindled in me such a flame that if I had been by myself I should have run.

"It is because they go so much in black," said Mr. Partington. "I always was in favour of it. Englishwomen have a certain wistful quality, and when they dress in black, you see——"

I heard no more, as we were crossing to the other side of one of those frequented streets.

To get my mother safely over was a task that never seemed, so long as she remained in London, to grow easier. She simply was incapable of learning. I remember very well on this occasion how I gripped one arm of her and Mr. Partington the other one. I pulled her forward, as a motor-car was coming; Mr. Partington did just the same. But she resisted, thinking it would be much better if we waited till the car had gone. I pulled and she began to argue. Mr. Partington, observing that she wished to stop, began to pull her back again, for fear the car should travel over us. I went on pulling one way and he pulled the other. And the end of the whole matter was that when we reached the pavement on the far side of the street my mother said that she could walk no more. We called a taxi and as she lay back in it, still breathing hard, we told the man where he should take her and then set off walking in the same direction.

As I said before, I was most happy; also since we were engaged in navigating through the crowd of people I did not observe that Mr. Partington was very silent. But when we had got into an emptier portion of the street and he replied by saying yes or no to what I said, then I looked at him carefully. His head was bowed, as if with the excessive weight of such a chin. Perhaps he was no more than thinking of the dresses at the theatre.

"It is impossible," I said, "impossible to make improvements in my dress. It is a triumph."

"Ah," he murmured.

Clearly he had something else upon his mind and something that he wished to speak to me about. And suddenly he started. "Who am I to talk about your dance?" he said.

"But I would value praise from you," said I, "as much as from those others. I am sure you can appreciate a thing of beauty."

He walked on, however, with his head held obstinately down.

"Why should you be despondent, Mr. Partington?" said I. "An artist such as you are will so quickly understand another kind of beauty. If you come a few times to the theatre you will know just as much about it as the rest of them. And that is beautiful," I said, "all that. . . ." I pointed at the undulating park behind the railings. Surely that would make him smile. His lips were pressed so tightly, as if they would never smile again.

"Who am I to talk about your dance?" he moaned.

"But you are modest, you are far too modest," I replied.

"If only——," with a sort of wild appeal his eyes looked into mine, "——if it only could be modest too," he said. And then he nervously walked faster and I followed him. His shoulders seemed to shrink away from me.

"Please, Mr. Partington," I said, "please wait. I want to ask you something."

He threw out a word or two, but they were incoherent.

So I darted forward and was just about to touch him when I saw a hand of his make very strange convulsive movements, as if it were the fin of a distracted fish. And thus we sped along in Piccadilly by the side of the Green Park. Very much as I was occupied by this pursuit my thoughts of other things were in a vague confusion, thoughts relating to the physical evidence of what was happening in this man's mind, and thoughts, like little curling snakes, about what he had said and thought about the people in the street who might be watching us. Yet I cared little for these other people. What I chiefly was resolved upon was to discover what lay in this person's mind. But if you are trying to investigate the moral and the intellectual labyrinth inside a man you certainly are handicapped if you are forced to run along a street behind the specimen that you are studying.

A motor charabanc was coming towards us, full of people, and the corner-seat in front was occupied by one who was asleep. This purple-faced man, a cloth cap upon his head, was rolling with the motion of the car. It seemed as if, despite all the excitement of my chase, it seemed as if he forced himself upon me. He was the Man who totally resigns himself to Fate. But

here was I, dissatisfied and with extreme exertion striving to obtain what Fate apparently had settled to deny me. Would it not be much more dignified if I refrained from clutching at this Mr. Partington? He was already a fair distance from me. I could slip away unnoticed.

In the park a little girl was weeping. As she stood and gazed up at the pink balloon which had escaped, her mother, who was sitting on the grass, endeavoured to console her. She was such a small girl that her weeping face was at the same height as her mother's face. The mother, as I watched, said something which put up a dam against the streaming tears; they could no longer flow because the eyes were wanted, every bit of them, to gaze at some unheard-of marvel. They were very grave. The mother went on talking and the eyes began to glow with thankfulness and with a look as if they were rejoicing in a sacrifice; a look this little girl might have if ever she became a soldier's mother and her son went marching to the wars. Though now her tender cheeks were still exhibiting the trace of tears, a different sort of tenderness was in her eyes, and it was they that fascinated me. Meanwhile the fluttering balloon had erred into the leafy branches of a tree; with great concern the little maiden put a query to the mother, who was once again successful in dispelling her alarm. This time indeed the answer made the little one smile roguishly.

"Oh, señorita!" It was Mr. Partington.

Before I knew what I could say to him the little girl had made of us confederates with herself. So bursting was she with enormous news that when she saw two persons standing near her she made haste to tell us of it. First of all she pointed up at the balloon and, when she saw that we perceived it, came a step or two towards us, for her other's arms were now no longer round her. She addressed us briefly, limiting herself in fact to one word, which was "Angels!" And she jerked her left arm up again, as if it had been made of wood.

"I do not understand her very well," I said.

But she was quite aware of this and so drew nearer to the iron bars, behind which we were standing.

Mr. Partington then spoke to her, and in a voice that was as gentle as the falling night.

She answered him. Her mother smiled at us and fortunately did not call her back, so that the little maiden's commerce with the world of science and imagination did not suffer, as with all too many pioneers, for reasons of a mundane character.

"Angel," she explained, "and my balloon. He will fetch it."

"He will have it as a buckle in his shoe," said Mr. Partington.

"Oh, truly, really?" she asked. "How do you know?" she said.

"How do I know? Well, let me see, how was it? . . . Last night in my garden—no this morning in my garden just as I was talking to a friend of mine, a snail, and——"

"Do they talk? I never knew they did." Her interest was intense and it was mixed with awe. By this time she had come quite close up to the iron bars.

"Oh, yes, they talk, they talk very nicely," said Mr. Partington.

"In English, just like you and me?" she said.

"I—I don't quite remember," said the harassed Partington. "But I'll tell you what it said, that snail."

"Yes, do," said the little girl, "and I'll tell you about the angels. They are going to fetch my balloon." She stopped, in order to see what effect this portentous announcement would make upon us. She had already told us, but what of that?

"Perhaps it will tell the angels about you," said Mr. Partington.

"Perhaps it will," said the little girl, "but——"

"You haven't been naughty, have you?" said Partington.

"No, not very," said she.

"Well then," said Partington, "it will be all right."

"But, you see, I've only had it for a short time, only since we came out this afternoon, so it really doesn't know me very well." She hung

her curly head, but in a moment she had thought of something else which made her cheerful. "If the angel catches in the tree," she said, "it *will* be fun." She clapped her hands and danced back to her mother.

"Let us go," I said. "It is too sad to say good-bye to such a creature.

In a shrill voice she was asking of her mother what exactly would take place if the poor angel found his wings entangled in the tree. How many people would be round the tree? Would a policeman or a little boy climb up to help the angel? Would they take it to a hospital? Could angels go to hospitals?

The mother, while she listened to these questions nodded pleasantly at us; and Mr. Partington took off his hat. As we resumed our walk, we both of us were in an altogether different mood from what we had been.

"I am a fool," he said, "the way I spoke about your dancing."

"Anyone who speaks as you were speaking to that little girl," said I, "is not a fool."

He twirled his stick round in a circle several times. "But what I ought to do," he said, "is to apologise. I crudely uttered my opinions, whereas I should——"

"They may be good. I want to hear them."

"But for you," said he, a little woefully, "they are not good at all. I never should have said a word."

"It only was a word or two," said I, "and now you must say everything. You must say everything, because we are good friends."

He looked at me, uncertain how to act. But in my face he read determination. So he prepared himself to speak. And presently, "I told you once before," said he, "about—there! that policeman holding up the traffic—he reminds me of another one who was assisting at the Horse Show at Olympia. A frightened mare was rearing and he held his hand up, as if he were in the streets. It was the most ridiculous affair; the public roared with laughter. And the animal, of course, was frightened by his white glove more than ever, and when she brought her hoofs down that policeman moved off very quickly. I am futile, just as he was."

"Yes, but——" I was puzzled.

"One's customary precepts may be most opportune," said he, "and how can you do Spanish dances without—what shall I say?—without passion? It must be passionate and all that kind of thing, and I'm a fool to have made any observations."

"But those other people at the theatre?" I said.

"They liked it. They are sensible and I am not. Oh, dash it! If I only were not so—not so——"

"Mr. Partington," I said, "you make me think. If my dance is passionate—you say it is—and it

arouses evil passions I shall go to Hell. I never thought of that."

He hesitated. At our feet the shadows of the leaves were dancing on the pavement. Mr. Partington came to a standstill there, so that this dainty dance was interfered with.

"How much does it profit anyone," said I, "to have great happiness on earth and afterwards to be banished out of Heaven?"

"That is true indeed," he said, "but still. . . ."

"You are the only one of them," said I, "who speaks the truth. And from now onwards I will think about my soul."

"But if your dance is not voluptuous I fear it won't be successful."

"I will think about my soul," I said.

"Yes, but look here, señorita. Mr. Wainwright didn't bring you over to England so that you could think about your soul. And, one way and another, he must have spent a good deal of money on this enterprise."

As he was talking in a voice charged with persuasion we went swiftly over into Hyde Park.

"Everything has been arranged," he said. "If I am not mistaken, they have had the seats on sale for several days and thousands of them may have been disposed of. If you don't perform an Andalucian dance the people may demand their money back."

"I will perform an Andalucian dance," I said,

"but I will leave out all the features that are bad." I settled that my dance should be as calm and orderly as was the aspect of this park.

"Think of your relatives in Spain," said he, "and of your mother. They have been quite justified in hoping that a large sum shall descend upon them. Who knows if they have not, on the strength of it, run up some debts? Your conduct therefore may involve your relatives in a predicament. Think of your relatives," said he.

"And what, besides that, would you do if you were in my place?" I asked.

"It was not right of me to cast aspersions on your dance. What do I know about it, after all?" he said. "Preserve as much of it as possible, I beg you."

"It is strange that you should talk like this," I said, "and I am disappointed, for you think more of the public and of Mr. Wainwright and the others than you think about my soul."

"Your soul is very dear to me, if I may say so," said the man. "But I believe that in one's ministrations to a soul one can make use of remedies that are too drastic. The most drastic remedy I ever heard of was employed by a connexion of my own; he was a retired colonial official, and the story is about him and his cook. Though she had been in service with his family for many years she was incompetent. My relative had been abroad a long time, and when he came back and found himself soon afterwards the

master of the house, he simply didn't know what he could do, because the food was terrible. He couldn't give her notice. Very probably she wouldn't have accepted it. Her food was making him quite ill. And so he married her and then she ceased to cook."

The park was full of people, who reminded me of Captain Jennings and Gibraltar. Even those who obviously had to struggle for their livelihood had now assumed a placid air. By the surroundings, I suppose, that self-assurance which they had so deeply, like good earth, was brought up to the surface. It was something to be envied.

"I am sorry for Mr. Wainwright," I said, "if he loses money over me; but now that I have seen the matter as it really is, what can I do?"

"Of course," said Mr. Partington, "I'm not the man who would invite you to do anything against your conscience. No, most certainly I wouldn't."

"It is you," said I, "who have awakened it."

He licked his lower lip. "But at the same time don't you think," he said, "that it is easy to exaggerate? A lot of people, let us hope, will escape the fires of Hell who feel that they are the most wretched criminals."

"But I do not want to hope," I said. "I want to be sure."

"There was a boy I once heard of—I believe," said Mr. Partington, "that he became one of

your Roman Catholic saints; and he started his career by being so persuaded of his own iniquity that he didn't want to go on living. He went out into the wilderness one day and stayed there until it was dinner-time."

"You think I exaggerate," I said.

"Well, what about your fellow-dancers in Spain?" said Mr. Partington. "I daresay some of them are worse than you—I mean are more suggestive in their poses."

"But they dance in Spain," I said, "and so their audience is not carried away by them. For me in England it is different. I must walk more carefully or I shall go, as I have told you, down to Hell. What is very good in one country is not very good in another."

"They each have their own ways," said Mr. Partington. "These people here, who walk about the park like this—in the Latin-American plazas there is a procession of men going round one way and women in the opposite way."

"What do the married people do?" I asked.

"I forget about them," said Mr. Partington, "and I wish I could forget some other things about those countries."

"What things?"

"Oh, I wouldn't dream of telling you."

The man was so emphatic that I knew it would be easy for me to break down his opposition. I marched off along a side-path bordered by great

shrubs and laughing flowers. He would be sure to follow me.

"Miss Mariposa! . . . What is this? . . . Where are you going to?'

I walked a little faster. Scarcely anyone was on this path.

"I say, Miss Mariposa! . . ." He had raised his voice. "Won't you stop? . . . I want to talk to you."

Then I sat down upon a chair; but Mr. Partington, before he took the next one, asked me if I would have no objection; and I signified, without a word, that he could sit there if it pleased him.

"May I ask," he said, "why you . . . It seems peculiar."

"Are you going to tell me that story?" said I.

"But it is a bad story, a horrible story," said Mr. Partington. "And you that are so solicitous about your soul—no! it is not a story one can tell."

As I was getting up he put his hand upon my sleeve, and I sat down again.

"But I don't understand you," he said. "It's contradictory. One moment you refuse to dance——"

"Well, now, I must go home," I interrupted him. "You do not wish to tell the tale and so I leave you."

"Women are the most extraordinary beings," he observed.

"I recommend," said I, "that you should stay and meditate about them after I have gone. Goodbye!"

"But don't go! If you really want to hear that story, you shall have it. And if you are shocked, don't say it's my fault. . . . In South America it was, and in a wicked house, so I was told, the evening before Good Friday all the visitors and girls stopped their pernicious commerce and received Communion together."

"So they will be saved," I said.

"Far better for them if they were like a reporter at one of our great revivalist meetings," said Mr. Partington. "The speaker on the platform pointed down at him and shouted: 'Young fellow, are you saved?' and he replied that he was only one of the reporters. . . . "But suppose we get along? It's rather late."

When we had gone a little way, "I think," said Mr. Partington, "we've had a most exciting walk."

"For my part I am pleased," said I, "that you have come with me."

CHAPTER X

ON the morning after these events I woke up with the blissful thought that I must go a journey or that I must fall in love, or that some other splendid thing would happen. This was going to be a day marked out from other days. I felt, as I lay in the bed, that I was lying prostrate on the sands of a mysterious, vast lake, and that I would be fetched by vessels I had never seen before, which then would carry me away. I let my arm hang from the bed, I let it hang so low that it was touching the bottom of the sea—well, I was wonderful. The hard, uneven bottom of the sea. . . . I leaned out of the bed and wondered if the carpet was so threadbare owing to the fingers which in other days had moved along it just as mine were moving.

Then I quite forgot what they had told me, here in England, that you should not jump out of your bed, for by so doing you may do some damage to your heart; but that it is advisable to get up slowly, after you have stretched yourself, as though you were a cat. I quickly went up to the window and I threw it open. Here was also something in which I did not adopt

the ways of England. People said hardly anybody in this land was wont to sleep with windows shut, for they considered it unhealthy. But my mother said that everyone must live the life he was intended for. "There is nothing," said she, "for an ass which is better than a pack-saddle." And we Andalucians—this was her opinion—would not be able to survive a night in bed with windows open.

Hurriedly I opened them, so that the cool, delicious air flowed in. It was a playful air which caught my night-gown at the arm, where I had been intending for a week or so to fasten up a long and ugly slit. The wind was making merry over my neglect; it caused that sleeve to flutter like a flag, until I ran back and put on my flannel dressing-jacket.

None of those few persons who were passing by—such people as the milk-man and I know not who—looked up to where I stood. I thought of one of the strange things—and doubtless there were others—you could see by being early in the streets of London. Once Raimundo had translated for me from a newspaper how several hundred people stood on a wet morning at the entrance of a prison where a man was being executed. They saw nothing of the deed—no more than they had seen of *his* deed—and when, after it had been accomplished, a small piece of paper notifying this was hung up on the outer wall they struggled frantically to get near the

paper, though they knew what words were on it and that in an hour they would be in the newspapers. . . . So there might well be some things strange and unaccountable among the scanty citizens who underneath my window happened to be passing up and down. But even if I stopped there and did not exert myself at all, I knew that this was going to be a brilliant day for me, as brilliant as the gay sunlight and the cloudlets which were running races over the pale sky. That wonderful resolve of mine, that I would not dance as they do in Seville—it had rescued me from falling down a precipice, and I could hold my arms wide open to the future. All the years would trip across the world to me with singing lips, the lovely years—but, in the meantime, what could I be doing until breakfast-time? Even if I had a bath and made my hair in all the ways I knew and tried on all my clothes, I did not see how I could occupy myself till breakfast.

One most necessary thing was to rehearse my new and inoffensive dance. So I went opposite the looking-glass and posed myself. I put my arms out slowly—but my legs, what could I do with them? It was not in me to do *entrechats,* that is to say three *entrechats* or four, as do the very skilful dancers. And this new dance was to be a thing of arms and legs; there would be no more movements of the body; it was they which had aroused my friends.

As I endeavoured to make up a dance that

should be satisfactory to Mr. Partington and all those millions of his countrymen, I much regretted that I had not more imagination. There I stood despondently; and when the wind, which I had loved a little while before, came in again to cheer me up and curled itself about my feet and lifted, as a joke, my night-gown, it succeeded only in annoying me. I shut the window. And for a long time most earnestly I persevered in trying to compose a dance. But as I was not feeling glad, how could I hope that it would have a good result? I thought at last that what remained for me was to observe the English dancers. Yet if I attempted nothing more than imitation of them, why should anybody wish to see me? If I could retain a little of the Andalucian atmosphere and still retain the favour of those righteous men— I was afraid that it was quite beyond my powers. If only Mr. Partington had not displayed to me that portion of himself which afterwards he wanted to conceal. But no, this was a most unworthy thought. We had to do our best or how should we escape the rage of all those holy men and women who are looking down upon us? I was going to be a solo dancer, which was a position so conspicuous that there was not the slightest hope that they would overlook me. All their calm eyes would be watching me. . . . I shivered. Would I have to do this all alone?

Thank Heaven that I had my mother. Even

now perhaps she would be lying there awake and ready with her good advice. And forthwith, not delaying even to put on my slippers, I went softly from my room and into hers, next door.

The dear soul was awake—she did not hear me—she was lying on her back and smiling. But I had not been there more than a few moments when she turned her head. "You have passed the night well?" said she. "I am pleased to see you."

"You were pleased," I said, "before you saw me. Will you tell me what it was?"

"Oh, that! It is a mere nothing. I have been considering the fleas."

"Have you got them?" I asked.

"No, that is what I laugh about. I wonder how they keep away the little demons. But you look so cold; it will be better if you come in here instead of them."

And so I got into my mother's bed. She kissed me, saying that it was like many years ago. "But now you are a famous one," she said. "I clap my hands."

"You have forgotten," I said gloomily, "what I was telling you last night, for I will dance according as these people do it and I never will be famous."

"But why not? You do the same as they do—what more can they want?" she asked.

"I shall not do it half so well," said I.

"*Ca!* in the early morning one is often sad," quoth she.

"Yet you were not," said I, "when you were thinking of those fleas."

"O daughter of my soul!" she said, "do you remember what they do in—was it Ecuador? Perhaps Don Carlos never told you what the priest said, who had been there. They have a sheep, it seems, in the hotels, and just before a visitor arrives the sheep is made to walk about his room, so that the fleas jump onto him and then he carries them away. . . . Now, if I found a flea in this hotel I would inform them all about that sheep."

"And they would ask you," I replied, "to bring your own sheep with you."

Thus we talked, with my bad spirits falling from me. And we lay in bed so long that the head-waiter sent our breakfast up; and after breakfast we were still in bed when a loud knock resounded on the door.

"I have come!" It was Raimundo's voice. "I have been waiting in the hall. Will you be long?"

"But is the house on fire?" said my dear mother.

"Would it get you up," he asked, "if I said that it was? Yes, the house is on fire."

"I hope you have passed the night well," said my mother.

"But aren't you excited about the house being——"

"Even if it were on fire," she said, "it is not my house. But why do you stay out there?"

He put his nose and one eye round the corner and, seeing that we both were still abed, he rapidly retired.

"Body of God!" cried my mother. "Come in when I tell you. Now," as he appeared, "what is it that brings you? Has the bottom of Purgatory fallen out?"

"The matter is this," he said, and I noticed that he looked firmly at my mother and avoided me, "the matter is that everything has been knocked on the head. Your daughter refuses to do a real Andalucian dance—she means to do something perfectly mild—and I withdraw. I am sorry; but the whole thing will be a fiasco. And I can't afford, my manager says I can't afford to be mixed up in a fiasco."

"By the sacred oil!" exclaimed my mother. "That is where we are!" She turned to me. "So you perceive what you have done," she said. "You are most foolish. You do not possess two finger's-breadth of forehead. Oh, that such a thing should happen! Put your face upon the pillow now." She was about to throw the sheets from off us, but as I was grasping them she snapped out to Raimundo, telling him to leave the room. When he observed that she was

anxious to throw off the sheets he bolted very quickly.

"Now," she said, "what do you mean by this?"

I pointed out to her that I had told her everything.

"The devil take you," she ejaculated, as she clutched my night-gown, for I was endeavouring to slide onto the floor.

"I told you very plainly," I said. "I gave it you to drink with a silver spoon."

"But this young man, he will not dance with you. They are abominable, these new thoughts of yours. The insolence of it! As if you knew better than other people!" While she was abusing me, she was at the same time trying to turn me round, but I was obstinate and I resisted. "Very fine, oh very fine," she said. "When we go back to Seville it will be as though we were the kind of bulls you have to goad into the ring. With jeers, I say, they will receive us. Now turn over. I am going to punish you."

But I refused to turn. And so we struggled on the bed. I lay as rigidly as possible upon my back, while she was kneeling at the side of me and trying very hard to push me over. If the chamber-maid had come in for the breakfast things she would have thought that we were playing games. Yet I could see my mother was in earnest. She believed that she could thrash the nonsense out of me. She tried and tried to turn me over and she breathed as if she were a

wind that blows up from the sea at Cadiz. I was thinking what it would be best to do and using all my muscles to prevent her doing what she wished. There were occasions, as I have related, when her ancient system of chastisement was a joy to me, but this time I did not desire it. And she knew me well enough to see that she would not achieve her wish without extreme exertion. Therefore she attempted by a supterfuge to gain her object. Still remaining in the same position and prepared to seize the slightest favourable opportunity, she started talking in a meditative way.

"What have I done," she said, "that God should give me such a child? I am a sinful woman, woe is me. I must have sinned——"

"They'll think, if they come in, that you are murdering me," I said.

"If they knew what I have been forced to bear! It is unbearable." At this she gave a sudden push, but I was watching her. "Some have grief of one kind," she continued, "others have another kind. It slays you swiftly or it kills you with a wooden knife. Oh, grief—grief"—she almost got my body round,—"oh, grief from everywhere," she said.

"It comes out of yourself," said I. "It is ourselves who make our grief, much more ourselves than God or thunderbolts."

"Ohò, you that have got no heart and dare to talk as if you knew what grief is! Wait until

you have a miserable daughter." One more thrust she gave, and this time with such vigour that I lost my balance, and as I half turned onto my back she struck so vehemently that I yelled. The door flew open.

"Ladies, ladies!" Mr. Wainwright said.

My mother and myself were scrambling to get underneath the bed-clothes.

"I must really ask you," Mr. Wainwright said, "to pay some small regard to—all this noise—remember that you are in a hotel." One sheet was now entirely over us, but he was talking loud enough for us to hear. "You will be asked to leave—the other people will complain. Excuse me coming in," he said.

"Do you come usually?" asked my mother, putting out her head. I thrust my arm up, in an effort to make smooth her most untidy hair. Myself I stayed below the sheet.

"As a matter of fact," said Mr. Wainwright, "I have in my time had some experience of bursting into ladies' rooms. When I used to go on tour the rivalry between the ladies now and then . . . but that is neither here nor there. This is a highly respectable hotel and——"

"And what have I done?" enquired my mother. "Surely I may talk to my little girl."

"The point is," said Mr. Wainwright, "that she answers you by screaming."

"That is what I think," said my mother, "and it is a pity."

I wondered, underneath those bed-clothes, how long they would go on talking. I was most abominably warm. "For the love of God!" I cried.

"Yes, absolutely," said my mother. "But what can I do? These gentlemen——"

"We will leave you in peace," said Mr. Wainwright, "and afterwards we can have a little consultation."

"*Ahà,* you know about it then," my mother said. Her voice was rising. "All this madness——"

"If I may interrupt you," said Mr. Wainwright, "we shall not advance the business by recrimination. I have thought it over and I think it will be best if our young friend there gives her nerves a holiday. She has been rather overstrained, I think. Suppose that for a while she just enjoys herself. That is what I suggest."

"But who will pay for it?" said my mother.

"Oh, don't have any anxiety about that," said he.

"God knows that you are not a parsimonious person," said my mother. "You would never stop the parrot's chocolate."

. . . . . .

My mother was so pleased with Mr. Wainwright that she would have done whatever he proposed; and when he said that he thought it was advisable that I should not go to the theatre at all just for the present she agreed to it, without

consulting me. Good Mr. Wainwright, he assured my mother that the dressing-room he had allotted me at the Excelsior would be allotted to no other person, pending my return. He really thought I would return to do the dance which I had put for evermore behind me. When I thought about that gaudy dance I shuddered. And if Mr. Wainwright, Mr. Drake and the ingenious Mr. Borax had approached me on their knees, like those three ancient Kings, and bearing the most wondrous gifts, I should have answered them as did another King another delegation. You may have heard how in his comfortable home near London His ex-Majesty, a youngish flabby man, replied to certain royalists who had, for the advancement of the cause, been working faithfully and indefatigably and courageously, and who had now arrived to lay the plans before their monarch. It was not a scheme from which all danger was eliminated; for the royal refugee himself had been reserved, of course, the high command of the devoted army. From no perils would that army shrink, from no fatigue, because they trusted in their God and King. (Moreover it would be so different from the European War, as they would this time only have to fight against opponents of their own race.) And if the operations had been happily conceived, if no disaster lay in wait for them, if no undreamed-of circumstances favoured the Republicans, and if in their own

ranks no weakness showed itself, then this would be the grandest, most triumphant undertaking. With a flame in their dark eyes the delegates addressed their lord—and very soon they were observed to go away. In his presence they had gravely sworn that they would shrink from nothing; but as they departed it is said that they were a pathetic, little band of shrunken men.

Thus I had with determination put behind me every thought of dancing in the style of Andalucia. Have we not been told incessantly by all the preachers that we must bethink ourselves of what is coming and that we must walk as warily as possible? So I would not do anything except an Anglo-Andalucian dance. I smiled to think that my good English friends and my dear mother would perceive that I could be as obstinate as any mule when it has made a resolution. With Raimundo I was angry, and I thought with bitterness about that Maisie woman. She would be successful now, because of my pre-occupation with my soul. I much regret to say that when this thought occurred to me my impulse was not to consider Maisie's victory—Raimundo was so feeble—I could not consider it a portion of the cross that martyrs and all pious people have to bear; no, when I thought of Maisie it was not with holy resignation.

At the same time I endeavoured to conceal from everyone the turmoil that was going on

within me. And I said to Mr. Wainwright that I would be very glad to have a holiday, as he suggested. Where should I begin? It was the London season, so that there was certainly no lack of entertainments. I would have to have an escort. Mr. Wainwright looked so kind as he was thinking of these plans for me that I had very serious qualms.

"All those advertisements," I said, "and all your other preparations—you must wish that you had never seen me."

"I have hope," he said, "that I can pacify the public. We can always say you are unwell."

"But if they see me in the streets or——"

"We can say you are recovering, that you have overworked yourself. And I believe," said he, "that that is true."

"I wish it were," I said. "But when I do make my appearance and they see that it is not the real dance of Andalucia—oh, I am unhappy to be such a plague for you."

The little man pretended to be brave. "It can't be helped," said he. "I understand that you are anxious about your salvation. Yes, yes. . . . After all, how many of the audience will be aware that you are dancing something else? And let us not forget that we are emphasising not your dance, but you—" he bowed —"your beauty."

"What I promise you, dear Mr. Wainwright, it is this," I said. "No toil shall be too much

for me. With all my heart I want to make you satisfied and——"

"Oh, that's all right," said he. "Don't agitate yourself, and everything will be all right, you'll see."

I had, when he spoke thus, to put my hand upon his arm. I put it underneath his cuff and let it lie there, for I felt that in this world of winds opposing one another he was like a nest for me. "If only, only I had never thought of my salvation, or," I moaned, "if I had had this thought a little later on."

"Don't mention it," he said. "It can't be helped."

"I am so young to cause you all this inconvenience."

His smile was like the song of angels. "Yes," he said, "but you are worth it."

I was nearly weeping and he gently patted me upon the cheek. He said he had been thinking of a cicerone for me in London. Captain Jennings was the sort of man who would be very suitable for that. With my approval he would write to him and ask him if he could give up a little of his time to acting as my escort. He would be delighted, Mr. Wainwright said. . . . For some things I would have preferred to go with Mr. Partington; but he could not go everywhere, like Captain Jennings. I intended, naturally, to have talks with Mr. Partington, since it was he who had so changed my life; but for amuse-

ments I would principally lean on Captain Jennings.

. . . . . .

He had relations everywhere and very amiable friends, so that he said it would be quite all right for him to take me to their houses or entertainments. He himself, he said, did not dance very well; but I was also destitute of skill in dances of the English ball-room. So he brought a blond young nephew with him to the Worcestershire; for this young man danced famously. His name was Hubert.

It had been arranged that Captain Jennings and his nephew should appear at the hotel an hour or so before we had to start, as that would leave me time enough, the captain said, to learn the two most usual dances. More than two I would not need. There was a small public sitting-room with a piano in it; so while the other people were at dinner we went in there. Very fortunately Captain Jennings knew a little of a fox-trot; he could only play it with one finger, but he helped it out with humming. And his nephew, who was very gay and all that, said it would be topping. I believe he had observed how very grim my mother was—she did indeed look like a sky two minutes previous to the thunderstorm—and Hubert, who surmised that it was owing to some argument about my dress or a divergence of opinion with regard to other feminine affairs, was boisterously cheerful. It

would have surprised him to have known that we were keenly watching one another. Some day there would be a fearful conflict as to whether I was justified in thinking so much of my soul; but for the moment we did nothing more than watch, and chiefly for the reason that the weapons which we had at our disposal did not seem to either of us very adequate for such a fight. Your cause may be extremely just—as each of us was feeling now—but those who lead an army to success are officers with some instruction. As for me, I would endeavour to instruct myself from Mr. Partington.

The dancing lessons started with young Mr. Hubert shuffling forward and inviting me to do the same. But as I did so, Captain Jennings was much interested, and his finger ceased to play.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," he said. "By the way, do you remember, have you ever heard about that dog of our Ambassador in Spain?"

"I never heard of him at all," my mother said, "and not of the Ambassador. What did they do?"

"We haven't got much time," said Hubert.

"Well, I'll tell you later on," the captain said, and thumped again the old piano.

Hubert slided forward his right leg and looked at me encouragingly.

"I could laugh," observed my mother from her chair. "If that is dancing, let me go to sleep."

"I should be very pleased," I said.

"The dances of my youth—the languid lilies that were bending the winds—the movements of the fingers—and the girls who fluttered like white, weary moths. The——"

"Of all those things," I said, "you can be dreaming if you go to bed. Good-night."

She rose and stamped out of the room. But at the door she halted and drew in her breath—which showed me what was going on inside her—and "I wish you, all of you, good-night," she said in a dull voice.

"Your mother is a little out of sorts," said Captain Jennings. "Now, to work."

And for ten minutes Hubert showed me what I had to do. Indeed it was not difficult. He put his arm around me, whereupon we danced a few times up and down between the window and the door. My teacher rather soon required a rest, but then he had been counting all the steps aloud and had been pulling me, because my thoughts were liable to wander. As we paused beside the door it opened and two ladies came into the room. The first one I had never seen, the other was that very corpulent and very active one with the grey hair. In build she was like an exaggerated pouter-pigeon. They hesitated, but when Captain Jennings spoke to them, explaining what we were about, and saying that in a few minutes we would go, they entered and sat down upon a sofa by the wall. They waited

silently for us to dance and then, as we were doing so, continued with their talk. The captain told me afterwards that it was very wearisome for him to have to listen. They were talking of hotels in several foreign places; the fat lady asked the questions, while the new arrival answered them and told her how much she would have to pay, and if the guests in these establishments were nice, and if the weather had been good. For ten years the fat lady had not been across the sea and she had got no plans for going, so that her innumerable queries irritated Captain Jennings. "And yet," he said to me, "I think it is pathetic. Go on with your dancing."

When my teacher introduced some variations, such as almost sitting down while we continued with the dance, I hoped that I was making progress and that he had not begun with these devices in despair at my not being able to assimilate the other steps.

"Good?" I said to him. "I am good?"

"Oh, yes, very good," he laughed.

Some vicious blows on the piano made us look at Captain Jennings, and I saw he was exasperated by the conversation of those ladies. So I turned round Mr. Hubert's wrist to see his watch—"Pardon me," said I, as I was doing it—and told his uncle it was time we left. The three of us were going to have our dinner at a restaurant.

When we were on the way the captain spoke about those ladies. "Will you believe it?" he said. "I had actually to listen while one of them asked the other if she liked Paris, just in the same tone as she would have enquired if she liked her beef underdone. And her friend was non-committal, as she didn't know what the fat lady thinks about Paris and she wished to be in agreement with her. So she said, 'Oh, well, Paris, of course.' . . . 'I don't like it as much as London,' said the fat woman. 'I really do love London. All the year round I love it.' How much of London do you suppose she knows?"

"Perhaps very little," I said.

"A minute corner. It is a nuisance to have to listen to such people."

"Won't you tell us," I said, "about that Ambassador and his dog?" This, I thought, would put him into better spirits.

And it was so, for as he related how the good Ambassador was wont to feed his dog at meals and how at one meal he forgot, since he was deeply interested in the talk, and how the dog refrained from acting as an ordinary animal not versed in diplomatic ways, but trotted out into the garden, pulled up a forget-me-not and laid it at his master's feet, as he was telling me of this the captain rapidly regained his tranquil frame of mind. "I am afraid," he said, "that those women rather upset me. It was foolish of me;

but I must confess that I was feeling just as amiable as—as——"

"As a hedgehog?" I said.

"Exactly. But I don't know that a hedgehog doesn't get more fun out of life than a kindly sort of animal."

. . . . . .

These words of his I recollected in an hour or two when I was gazing at the other dancers. Most of them indeed were young and very beautifully did they dance, but there were some old people who were objects, as I told the captain, of great fun to everyone, save to themselves and to their partners and to those they bumped against. One was a rather tall old gentleman who danced as if his boots had nails projecting through their soles; one was a little bald old gentleman—he has a military title, and they told me that he dances, dances with enormous perseverance. Usually his partner's chin is higher than his head, so that he does not speak to her, but with a very serious expression pulls her round.

"If he works as hard at soldiering," I said, "there is no foe that could withstand him."

"I fancy," said Captain Jennings, "that his soldiering is a little rusty, like his dancing. Do you see how he does a kind of schoolroom valse, throwing out his little legs very precisely? And all the time the band plays fox-trots, one-steps and that sort of thing."

"Don't his partners tell him?" I asked. "But

who is that other little fellow?" Really I was enjoying myself, even though my lack of proficiency obliged me to be a spectator for most of the time.

Captain Jennings did not know who was the other tiny man. But he enquired and ascertained he was a foreign artist, naturally with a title. "I am told," the captain said, "that he spends the mornings in his studio, and in the afternoons he rushes round to tea-parties and then, as you see, to dances, where he cajoles the ladies into letting themselves be painted."

"And how," I asked, "are his pictures?"

"I have no idea," said the captain. "But judging by his methods I imagine that they must have some resemblance to the wines I saw advertised in a catalogue the other day. Those wines were recommended by the merchant as being very suitable for consumption with ærated waters."

I was much more interested in those funny little men than in the handsome women, some of them with apprehensive, hen-like eyes, or the flimsy, pretty girls, or the blocks of ice with flowers all round them or the luxury of everything, the shining floor, the lights, the hanging garlands.

Suddenly I saw my old friend Lady Loseford, Captain Jennings' sister. She sailed up to me and, in a flabby manner for so strong and large a woman, shook my hand. She showed no more surprise to see me than if we had parted half an hour ago. She spoke to Captain Jennings and

he said that it would please her if he could go down there for another week-end.

Hubert passed us. He was talking to his partner very earnestly as they went round. I followed them with my eyes.

"Oh, my sister has been asking," Captain Jennings said, " how soon you will be on at the Excelsior. What shall I tell her?"

"Tell her anything you like," I said. He knew more or less what had occurred; but there, in those surroundings, I did not desire him to begin explaining to his sister that I was concerned about my soul. How could one talk in there about the far most serious matter of the world?

Once more I caught a glimpse of Mr. Hubert and his partner. They were still confabulating, beside us. He made known to me by signs that he would fetch me for the next dance; and then off he went again.

"Those two, what are they talking of?" said I to Captain Jennings.

"Horses," said the captain. "When they talk so seriously you can be quite sure it has to do with horses."

CHAPTER XI

AS the reconciliation with my mother did not come about as quickly as I hoped it would, I much preferred to go away to Lady Loseford's for a few days than to be with my dear mother in the same hotel and waiting for the storm which hung perpetually over us. If I went out with Captain Jennings or with Hubert to a dance—they took me also to some other things I could enjoy, Kew Gardens, for example, and the cinemas—yet this did not absent me from my mother long enough.

One afternoon I had invited Mr. Partington, the kindly dressmaker, to come for a walk with me. He scarcely had been near me since that day when he had had such a tremendous influence upon my life. It was as if he felt remorse.

"I didn't think," he said, as we were going down a long, broad street, "I really didn't think that it would have such consequences."

"And you are sorry you have saved me, Mr. Partington?" I said. "I am surprised."

"It isn't that," said he. "You know it isn't that. But—I never dreamed that any word of mine—the responsibility. . . ."

"God in Heaven," I cried. The street had

only one or two casual persons in it, so that I did not have to subdue myself. "Of all those I have met," I said, "since I left Seville, you are the most unaccountable. You put me on the road of righteousness and then you wring your hands."

"But not because of that," said he, "as you must be aware." He jerked an arm out, as if he were warding off the blows of an invisible opponent.

"Those other people, you consider them much more," I said, "the people at the theatre and all the public."

"No, I assure you," said the man, "it is not so. At least I think about them very little in comparison with you. If I have been instrumental in guiding you at all I am exceedingly, more than exceedingly, gratified."

"What is it then that worries you?" I asked.

"Your fame. If you should win no fame," said he, "just when you were about to grasp it. . . ."

I was in that mood that would have criticized whatever he might say. "Oh, fame!" said I. "As if I cared for such a thing!"

"But do you mean to say . . .?" A sudden joy had come into his voice.

"Yes, yes."

"My dear, young friend! How wonderful! You are a woman in a thousand, in a million."

He was so enthusiastic that he made me have

a most absurd idea. A butcher's boy was driving helter-skelter down the street—his cart was mostly a large box on which he sat so gaily—I would rush along as he did, paying more attention to the sunlight and the people than to what was in the box. The sunlight and the people were alive, his goods were dead. I had been feeling that this fame was pushing up, was calling me—and that could not be so, for it was something dead and I would go careering on so merrily.

"Mi hombrecito! You and I are friends," I said, "for ever."

"Put your hand in mine," said Mr. Partington. His voice was trembling and I should have liked if I could solemnly have shaken hands with him.

But this shaking hands a second time that afternoon recalled to me a comic episode which Captain Jennings once had told me. When the King of Portugal, Dom Carlos, came to London he received some deputations from a number of bodies, such as the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce, the Anglo-Portuguese Benevolent Society, the Portuguese Consuls, and so forth. Nearly every one of these deputations included a certain Mr. Pinto-Leite, with whom the King therefore shook hands over and over again.

"Ah well," said Mr. Partington, "I am sorry that I merely make you laugh."

"You do not," I said. "I am very fond of you.

When I go to Lady Loseford's house I will take you with me."

I am not sure whether you obtain more happiness by keeping many friendships at the same time, like a row of little lamps which at a garden-festival are lighted when the darkness comes, or if it is the wiser plan to give all your attention to one great and lonely friendship, which is like the full-moon radiant on a garden and obliterating, as it were, all other lights. Perhaps there are some people who make up their minds to cultivate the many friendships or the one, because it seems to them that out of many little lamps you will be able to keep burning one or two despite the wind and rain, or else—with such as dedicate themselves to one great friendship—since it seems that this tremendous lamp which puts all others in the shade has far the greatest hope of permanence. As if the moon's light will not vanish, like the light of little candles in the wind.

There are people, I believe, who make their choice deliberately between those kinds of friendship. As for me, I have been glad to take them, now to one and now the other. Usually I have loved one man extremely for a time, but this has not prevented me from looking at some other men.

I was, as you may have perceived, in love with Mr. Partington. And I was very happy to be so in love with him, because it was not owing to

the beauty of his body, which was moderate, but on account—well, I do not remember very accurately what the causes were. Some women—I have heard them—will explain these things with great precision. I do not say that it is unnatural to know exactly why you love a man; but what I say is that for me it would be perfectly impossible. I could no more put down the reasons than I could declare if it was eight o'clock or fifteen minutes after eight when I was conscious that I was in love with him.

Mr. Partington was so agitated when I said that I would take him to the house of Lady Loseford for the week-end that he scarcely paid attention to my further statement, namely, that I meant to take young Mr. Hubert to that Grantley woman at the theatre. When Hubert first had asked me I had had my scruples; but why should I, after all, not let Raimundo have a rival, seeing how he had behaved to me?

"It would be wonderful," Mr. Partington was saying. "But do you really think that I can go to Lady Loseford's?"

"I want to leave my mother here," I said, "so we shall be two people and not more."

"But what I mean is this," he said. "It doesn't matter that I am a dressmaker, because my ordinary charges are so high that I am looked upon as quite a person one can meet. Yet I am rather dubious about you taking me to Huntingfold. It's

not as if you had been asked—or have you been? —to bring a man."

His very awkwardness endeared him to me. And I laughed. "My friend," said I, "if you are frightened to come with me for so short a distance, then——"

"I will go with you up to Heaven or Hell," he said, "if only you get Lady Loseford to invite me."

So I undertook to send a letter to that flurried and benignant woman. Captain Jennings wrote it for me, and the answer said that any friend of mine would be quite welcome and that both Sir William and herself were looking forward to my visit. Little did they dream of what was going to happen.

. . . . . .

We all went down together in the train, the captain, Mr. Partington and I. Before I started my career from Seville I had never once been in a railway train. But if you happen to be born in Seville there is no compelling cause for you to travel. Doubtless there are people from my beautiful old town who go away from her. I went away myself. And if mankind were never foolish this would be a less attractive world, I think; and also, if you never go away from Seville you cannot enjoy that grandest of delights in coming back.

Well, as I said, I had not been a traveller before the day when Mr. Wainwright was success-

ful in persuading my dear mother and myself to go with him. And after that eventful day I seemed to be forever sitting in a train.

That little journey down to Huntingfold was interesting on account of those two people who were with me. I had not explained to Mr. Partington about the captain having wanted me to marry him. No doubt I should have told it all to Mr. Partington, but I had had no opportunity. And so the modest dressmaker felt only vaguely hostile with regard to Captain Jennings. It was not so simple to perceive the captain's sentiments, because he was well-bred and for the moment had them in control. I was amused a little when, with the intention of removing the slight atmosphere of restraint, he started being, as it were, the host of all the scenery. This line was not well known to Mr. Partington; and he and I received with pleasure Captain Jennings' information. I, at any rate, would have been glad to hear it even if there had not been the present awkwardness between the two men.

Much of what the captain pointed out I have forgotten, other things I now will not repeat, for I am anxious to relate what came to pass at Lady Loseford's; and I therefore will give only one or two of his remarks.

"That building over there," he said, "is a big varnish factory and that artistic red house is a laundry, I happen to know."

The train had settled down to a good speed and I lay back luxuriously on the cushions.

"That is the town-hall of one of the suburbs over there," said Captain Jennings.

"Thank you very much," I said. I had the feeling that it would be nice, when I got back to Seville, to narrate these things.

"Now, that exotic sort of building—you can see it still," he said. "They make a celebrated patent food in there."

"But you know everything," said I.

He laughed. "The maker of that food," he said, "was made a baronet—not because of his invention. He became a financier, a big fellow, and the Government had to decide whether to give him the baronetcy or have him up for fraud."

"Oh, well," said Mr. Partington in rather a defiant tone, "if we were in the Argentine I could show you the haciendas of a world-famous firm."

"I should like to go out there some time," said Captain Jennings.

And Luke Partington nodded.

Then for some minutes they neither of them spoke. Perhaps it was not really minutes, but I know that we were all uncomfortable.

Captain Jennings rubbed his hands. "I don't know whether my sister has asked anybody else," he said, "but we must see to it that we have a jolly week-end. My young nephew may be coming down," he said to me.

"I wish," said I, "that I could dance as he does."

"What is that kind of dancing compared with yours?" said Captain Jennings. "When you—that is——"

"The señorita *will* appear," said Partington stoutly. "And even with her modified style of dancing I am sure that she will have success."

"Oh, certainly, certainly," said the captain, as he turned his face away from us and looked out of the window. I could, however, see that he was drawing in his lips, since he was impatient with Mr. Partington.

We passed a great field in which rows of vegetables were being cultivated. And they made me think how all their life was well arranged.

"I see you don't like the view," said Captain Jennings, "but it gets better in a few miles."

"The truth is," said I, "that I was thinking about other matters. There is no good order in my life. It seems to me that I am being swept in several directions."

"I should think," said the captain, "that a great many other people have that kind of sensation; at least they would have if they stopped to think about it."

"But with me," I said, "it really is so. Why are you smiling?"

"Only at the thought," he said, "that when you've reached my venerable age you won't be in the least disturbed by your life not being a

straight line sort of business. We have to go journeys of all kinds and—though I don't want to force my opinions on you or anyone else—I think there's not very much fun in those journeys or other enterprises which are not, more or less, a series of digressions. But I wanted to talk about a more mundane subject, to wit, my nephew Hubert."

"I like him," I said. "And perhaps I shouldn't be so sad about my life."

"That is right," said the captain. "Hubert told me that he was going to meet Maisie Grantley. What sort of a girl is she?"

"She is as much a girl," I said, "as the mother who bore her."

"I daresay," said the captain.

As for Mr. Partington, he made a groaning sound.

"Well, how can I be fond of that woman?" I asked. "She has the sneering disposition."

"Probably Hubert can look after himself," said his uncle, "but he is very young, you know, and these actresses——"

"She is no actress at all," I said. "She is an ordinary woman. As we say, she eats with a wooden spoon."

"A neighbour of my sister's, when he was showing me his new tennis posts the other day," said Captain Jennings, "and they really were very fine ones, he said that he went on the principle that

you should never buy anything, but if you *did* buy then it should be the best."

"Excuse me," said Mr. Partington.

"Dear Mr. Luke," I said, "you are a good man. But"—I stroked his hand as I was saying this—"but one can be too good."

"I am rather old-fashioned," he said; and he looked so awkward, especially when you contrasted him with Captain Jennings, that I felt towards him as a mother to her child.

"I only meant to say," said Captain Jennings, "that a youngster like my nephew—I expressed it crudely—is a little apt to be promiscuous."

"But he is a good-natured boy," I said.

"If he were less good-natured," said the captain, "he would cause his family less trouble. He is not so foolish as some other boys who would run away with Maisie Grantley because she is well known; but he might do so out of sheer politeness, if she suggested it."

I have found that when a person does a thing of which you would not have suspected him it gives you an unpleasant shock. This is not so much owing to his conduct as to the sad ignorance in which you hitherto have been regarding it. So I declared that I would not take Hubert to the Grantley; no, not even though I had assured him that I would. The whole thing had been thought out very badly; for my wish had not been to spoil Hubert's life but, in so far as it was possible for me, to spoil Raimundo's.

"Once or twice," said Captain Jennings, "I have seen her and she always reminds me of the glass of brandy that you want for *bœuf à la mode*."

So we branched off into talking about food and we enjoyed ourselves exceedingly, all three of us. I told them of some Andalucian dishes, for example of the omelettes with potatoes woven into them; and Captain Jennings smiled to think of a risotto with red pepper at a country inn near Algeciras which had brought the tears into his eyes—he nearly brought the happy tears to mine; and Mr. Partington was glad to tell us of a pink sauce, largely made of fruit, down in the Argentine, a sauce which made the slabs of beef turn into angels' food.

. . . . . .

So fascinating did this kind of conversation prove that even when we got out of the train and while we drove up to the house and after we had sat down in the well-remembered hall for tea—our hostess talking of three things at once and good Sir William by the empty fire-place saying his "Ha! ha!"—we found that we were still inclined to let our conversation dwell on what one eats.

The captain had been speaking of some woman. "I'm surprised," he said, "she never married. Her cakes are really even better than these."

"Ha! ha!" said Sir William.

But if I have given the impression that the worthy gentleman confined himself to this re-

mark, no matter what was being said, I do him an injustice. For presently, as we were sitting there, it was observed that Lady Loseford had forgotten to give Captain Jennings any tea. She herself would not, perhaps, have noticed it; but when we others had half finished, he, in a pathetic, comic voice, asked for a cup. And thereupon, while everyone, including Lady Loseford, was expressing sympathy with the neglected officer, Sir William from the fire-place asked his wife to put two lumps of sugar in.

I knew sufficient of the English language now to understand him, and I laughed. So did the others in varying degrees. And Sir William himself threw back his massive head and laughed the loudest.

We had thus become a very joyful little party. I had watched Sir William cast, when we arrived, a rather puzzled glance at Mr. Partington. No doubt the burly baronet had never in his life encountered a male dressmaker; but after his successful joke about the lumps of sugar he was so entirely well-disposed to all the world that he invited my dear Partington to join him in an expedition to the stables.

Lady Loseford said that was a good idea, because she was about to take me and the captain off to Mrs. Mason's cottage. Three of us were all that it would hold. But if I would prefer, she said, to see the horses——.

I preferred to show that while I had brought

down a friend, a friend whom I would openly confess to all of them, if it was necessary, that I loved, yet I could live without him for a short time. Let them see that Spanish women are not only passionate, but full of self-control. Let them see that we are thus the perfect lovers.

In this way it came about that Lady Loseford and myself set out with Captain Jennings in the middle. He was carrying the basket which contained the things for Mrs. Mason. We were late, it seemed, as Lady Loseford had got several appointments before dinner. So she went along like a machine and all that Captain Jennings and myself could do was to keep up with her. He changed the basket now and then from one hand to the other; but I did not feel strong enough to offer to assist him. When we reached the cottage Lady Loseford was ahead of us. We found her firing off short sentences to Mrs. Mason—chiefly, I believe, enquiries as to Mrs. Mason's ailments. Captain Jennings put his basket down upon the table and went over to the shelf on which the book was kept from which his sister in a moment would be reading. After he had looked at it he came to me and—with Mrs. Mason still engaged in answering the many queries, which she did with little smiles—the captain whispered to me that the book which now was being read was called *"The Life of Apollonius of Tyana, by Philostratus."* He said he thought that was the name of it.

I asked him, but with my expression only, what kind of a book it was.

Then from his face I saw that I was building on the air, because he also did not know.

So I made up my mind to listen very carefully; but I might have spared myself the trouble, for when Lady Loseford seized the book and started at the place where she had last left off, it was at such a break-neck speed that even Captain Jennings did not follow very easily. On two occasions during that short recitation he requested Lady Loseford to repeat a word. She did so and did not make any comment. Yet I think it gratified her to perceive that what she read excited so much interest. For poor old Mrs. Mason it would have been just as useful to attempt to interrupt a thunderstorm. And as the reader closed the book she was so satisfied that she sat beaming at us all and then asked Captain Jennings to explain what she had read to me as we walked back across the fields. At his suggestion he was lent the book; and, a few minutes later, as we started slowly, he and I—for Lady Loseford had departed, since she said she was obliged to see a man at once—I occupied myself with listening while the captain strode beside me and translated:

" 'From that moment he began to insult the sage'—I suppose the sage is Apollonius," said Captain Jennings.

"And who is the other one?" I asked.

"Let me read on," said he. "Yet how strange it is," he continued, "that I should be doing this. One moment we are with Mrs. Mason and the next moment with Apollonius. But life is like that," he sighed.

"Like which of them?" said I.

"I mean," he said, "that it goes up and down. Ah yes. But I see you would prefer me to go on with the book."

I was indeed very glad that he should do so, for, considering what had occurred when I had been at Huntingfold the other time, we should have felt uneasy passing through those fields alone without this Apollonius.

The captain then continued to translate. He let his finger move along the line and this is what he said: " 'From that moment he began to insult the sage, by cutting off his beard and hair, and confining him among the vilest felons; and as regards his hair being shaved, Apollonius remarked: "I had forgotten, O Sovereign, that it was treasonable to wear long hair." And as regards his imprisonment in bonds, he remarked: "If you think me a wizard, how will you ever fetter me? And if you fetter me, how can you say that I am a wizard?" "Yes," replied the Emperor, "for I will not release you until you have turned into water or into some wild animal or into a tree." "I will not turn into these things," said Apollonius, "even if I could for I will not even betray men who, in violation of all

justice, stand in peril; and what I am, that I will remain; but I am ready to endure all you can inflict upon my vile body, until I have finished pleading the cause of these persons." "And who," asked the Emperor, "is going to plead your cause?" "Time," replied Apollonius, "and the spirit of the gods and the passion for wisdom which animates me." ' . . . That is the end of the passage," said the captain.

We were still some distance from the house, for while translating he had walked quite slowly.

"It is a very nice passage," I said. "I don't know which part of it I like best. Now let us go more rapidly."

"I should have liked," said Captain Jennings in a dreamy fashion, "to have——"

"But if," I interrupted him, "we stop here and discuss that Apollonius we shall be very late."

In fact, as we walked hurriedly, I spoke but once and then I had not well considered what I said. I told him I was wondering whether any people similar to Apollonius lived at present.

"Apollonius?" he said. "Oh, yes. The man we read about. I think the patriarchs were most sincere, religious men; but their morals, if they practised them to-day, would land them in gaol inside of a week."

"For example," said I, "what kind of morals?"

His face, as I glanced sideways at it, was quite grave. He caused the vague and pearly-coloured sky to look as if it were a school-room wall.

"Pernicious morals," said the captain, "but as you know nothing of them——"

"Still, I wonder what they are," I said.

. . . . . .

That evening when we had dined we all went strolling up and down the garden-paths. I told you once, I think, how this was a great mania with Lady Loseford, always to construct new paths. They twined among each other and they intertwined in the most complicated fashion. It was easy, therefore, to go straying from the other people; and it happened that I found myself alone with my dear Partington upon a sunken path that went between high walls of rhododendrons. They were not in bloom; but I felt as if all the air was laden with the scent of a mysterious flower. And there was something very strange about the stars, for some of them were dancing gaily and some others were surveying us with a keen mockery.

"How wonderful it is," said Partington, "that you and I——"

"We never know," I murmured, "when the scorpion will prick us, when we shall be in love."

"And that you should be in love with me!" he said.

I stroked the sleeve of his soft evening-suit. And subsequently when I mentioned that I loved him so because he made me be a better woman, he said he was very glad and that he chanced to have with him a book of sermons from the Flem-

ish. He had brought them down to read at night and if it interested me to hear them—they would certainly be very edifying.

I replied that I would come with pleasure to his room and we would read a little sermon.

He explained to me where his room was situated.

CHAPTER XII

FOR him who doesn't like broth, as we say, three cups of it are waiting; and one has to do what is against one's inclination. If I now could altogether please myself I would relate, just as I have done of the other incidents, how I went in that night to Mr. Partington's. But as I was going to tell you how the man had changed, for it was this which principally had impressed me—and if one is talking of events I think one cannot hope to give them all, but that one simply ought to give the chief ones or what seemed to be the chief ones—just as I was going on as usual it occurred to me that I should first on this occasion turn aside to deal with something else; for there will be undoubtedly a number of you who desire to know if it made no particular impression on me to betake myself—a thing which I had never done before—into the bedroom of a gentleman at night.

What can I say? It would not be the truth if I pretend that I was ignorant of everything. And if I was not more excited it was owing to the fact that I had now for some time looked upon my Partington as him whom Heaven had made to be my man, so that I regarded him al-

ready as my husband and it mattered rather little to me when he really should become my husband and when we should have the benediction of the Holy Church. Of course I would not in the night have gone to anybody else's room; but was it not quite natural that he was different to me from other men and that I practically thought of him as if we had been married for long years, when I would go into his room with no more thrill than I would eat a piece of bread? I fear that I will horrify a lot of people; but if I am not romantic I at any rate am truthful. You will not be pleased with me perhaps, because I think that in this world there are some people who prefer romance to ordinary truth. So I have told you what the truth is with respect to this affair—and those who by this time have learned to know me will not have required such explanations—namely that I was so little agitated by thus entering the room of Partington that I was absolutely capable of noticing all kinds of things. And what I mostly did perceive was the great change in him.

He trembled and was much more serious than usual. "You know," said he in a low voice, as I sat down upon a little sofa, "I should not have let you come in here."

"Very well," I said, "then if you wish it I will go away."

"Oh, don't be angry with me. You don't understand," he said.

He looked so miserable and so helpless that

I could not keep myself from smiling. "Come now, little man," I said, "take up that volume you were talking of and let us have a sermon from the Flemish."

As he went towards the table to his bedside I got up, because in front of me, across the room, there was a large bow-window open to the night. It was the kind of night in which one ought to listen to a sermon, for it was like those which I had seen in pictures hanging in the Seville churches, pictures of the birth of Jesus Christ. I used to think those ancient artists were such amiable men, since they permitted everything, the clouds, the brilliant stars, the moon, to gaze down from on high on that occasion of rejoicing; and I felt that it distressed them to leave out the sun, the rainbows, and whatever else lives in the sky. Now it was such a night.

A wooden seat ran all round the bow-window. I knelt down upon it, put my arms across the window-sill and thought that I had never seen so beautiful a sight. It was indeed so beautiful that a sharp sadness, like a serpent, writhed in me. But then the splendour of the night thrust other thoughts away. . . . Perhaps it was not such a very splendid night; and I may have been less calm, after all, than I had fancied. . . . I was one with all the beings of the night, the moon and the black branches of the trees, the whirring insects and the stars. They and myself were

all the work of one Creator, we were brothers and . . . .

"I think," said Partington, "we'd better shut the window. These insects round the lamp are such a nuisance. They will bother us when we are reading."

"Put it out then, for the love of God," said I. "If you come here the moon gives light enough."

He turned the lamp out, laughing nervously a little. "I have never read by moonlight yet," said he.

"Sit down," said I, "beside me. Did you ever see a night so wonderful?"

"You are—oh well," he said, "why should I try to understand what God has done? But I can pray at least that He will make me worthier of you."

It was unfortunate, but while the good man knelt there by the window with his hands before his face and everything was very solemn I could not prevent a sudden burst of laughter.

He was startled and he stared at me. His eyes were like those of the frogs we used to pull apart when we were innocent and happy children on the river-bank in Seville.

"Pardon me," I said, "but I could not help laughing. I am one of those who know themselves a little and what you are going to ask of God is most ridiculous. I thought that He must have a sense of humour or He could not long

endure the many foolish things that He is forced to listen to."

"I see," said Partington. "Shall I begin to read?"

"Before you do," said I, "there is one thing, and more perhaps, that I must ask you. It has troubled me for days and days."

"If I can help you," said my worthy Partington.

I meditated for some moments, as I was not sure how I could say it best.

He touched some hair of mine that happened to be floating round my ear and seemed to him to be untidy. How his fingers trembled!

"Listen now, my friend," said I. "For what have I been brought from my own country? In the period that I have been in yours what have I done? The answer is that I have not done anything at all."

"But you are the most magnificent——"

"Oh, you wash my face, that is you flatter me," I said. "If you will look at things just as they are you will confess that I have been a failure and I feel that I will be so to the end."

He vigorously shook his head. "No, not at all," said he, "for you are not the same girl now as when you landed here. You have developed. Is that nothing?"

I admit that it was very nice to hear him talk like that. But still I had my doubts. "You make me feel," said I, "like the black-beetle's children

when he called them, saying: 'Come to me, my grains of gold!' The truth is I have come from Andalucia because there was a hope that I would win a great success in England. But, instead of that . . . ."

He put a kindly hand around my neck.

"Of course," said I, as I moved nearer to him, "if I had not come we never should have met."

"We never should have met," he murmured.

Then, as he was silent, I had opportunity to think. I thought of him and of the love which I was glad to see in him. I thought about myself and wondered if I really had developed. Since he did not speak I shot a glance at him and saw his eyes were shut, whereas his lips were moving. It might come about, so I reflected, that if I developed more I would grow just as good as he was. . . . Out there in the night the land was full of little, furtive noises. . . . When I turned to him again his face was frowning, as if it was very difficult to be so good.

"My friend," I whispered, "open your two eyes and look at all the marvels of the night."

He shivered, but he looked about him. And in a low voice he said that he would read to me a little from his book.

"Do as you prefer," I said.

He helped me round into a sitting attitude and went across the room to fetch the volume. He came back and held it up, so that the moonlight fell upon the pages.

"Where shall I begin?" he asked.

"Read anything you like," said I. And as I laid my hand haphazard on it I requested him, if so it pleased him, to begin from there.

"This," he said, "is for the Fifth Sunday after Pentecost, and it deals with the fifth and sixth and ninth Commandments."

"It is all the same to me," I said.

"I chose that sermon quite by chance," said he. "There are some very good ones in this book. Indeed, the book itself"—he showed me the outside of it—"is very handsome."

It was of a kind of red with gold embroidery. And in the centre of the binding was a coat of arms which showed, said Mr. Partington, that it had been in some great library.

"The people of my town were much amused," I said, "because a thief got into someone's house like that, with treasures in it, and he left a book there which was lying in a very prominent position, and which old Don Marco always has asserted to be of the utmost value."

"And perhaps it was," said Mr. Partington.

"That thief," said I, "was not a common fellow. When at last they caught him they discovered he was very clever with respect to works of art. Don Marco's barrister did all he could to make him say it was an oversight that he had left the book; but he insisted that he knew exactly what the book was worth."

"How could the man," said Partington, "lead such a life as that!"

"When it happened I was only a small girl," I said, "but I have heard about it many times. He told the public in the law-court openly what all the things were worth which he had taken. If he had an argument with somebody about the value of an object he had stolen, it was always he who knew the real value. Therefore he became respected for his knowledge—he had taken articles from many houses and the case against him occupied the lawyers for a long time. Gradually he became respected and some people were immensely pleased when he bestowed on them a compliment for something they possessed, and more pleased still because he had not gone away with it in consequence of its large size or weight."

"That man," said Partington, "is one of those one talks about."

"It is the truth," said I. "But let us go on with your Flemish sermon after Pentecost."

"And it will be a good one, you will see," quoth he. Soon he had found the place again and in a noble, ringing voice he started. " 'Some,' said he, "deceived by the devil, imagine that——'

I begged him not to read so loudly, lest he should awaken people in the house; such words would make them think that the last hour had come. But certainly, I said, it was an excellent beginning for a sermon.

"One can see," said Mr. Partington, "those heavy Flemish people sitting rigid, scarcely breathing."

"And the women!" put in. "They must have been afraid."

He soothed me for a while with his protecting arm. . . . Presently he said that it was strange that we two should have come together out of all the world of people.

"And at this very moment," said I, "there will be who knows how many persons who have similar ideas. Thousands and thousands of them who believe that—how shall I say it—that all the centuries have laboured so that in the end they two should be produced."

"Good luck to them," said Mr. Partington. "Don't you believe it too?" He laughed a little shyly.

I stretched up and kissed him. Then I thought how great was our advantage over those poor Flemings after Pentecost who had to sit there very quietly and never interrupt the discourse.

Mr. Partington could see I wanted him to go on reading. He began again from the beginning. " 'Some,' " said he, " 'deceived by the devil, imagine that a chaste life is sad and an impure life enjoyable. This is not so, for according to Saint Chrysostom there is no greater pleasure than to conquer the concupiscences of the flesh; and according to Saint Bonaventure he who lives in impurity is, as it were, already in the torments

of Hell. Whence then does it come that, not only among young people but even amongst their elders, there are so many slaves of the devil of impurity to be found? It is owing to the deceit of the evil one, to the deception of the world and the temptations of the flesh. According to Sacred Scripture there are three things most hateful to God and men, namely: an old man that is unchaste, a poor man that is proud and a rich man that is unjust: yet, alas! such perverse people do exist. God grant that they may be converted.'

"You don't want me to read any more?" said he.

I answered that there was this Saint Chrysostom near to the commencement and that I knew nothing of him.

"He maintained, it seems," said Mr. Partington, "that there is no greater pleasure than to conquer the concupiscences of the flesh."

I shut my eyes so that I could the better concentrate my thoughts. "It is the greatest pleasure of all," said I, "if one—but everybody is not made like everybody else."

"Oh, Mariposa!" He had overwhelmed me. . . .

Afterwards, when we were kneeling on that seat again and looking up into the sky, we did not find it necessary to say any words at all. We were so happy. It appeared to me that we had swept away all the pretences from our path. The Milky Way was very marvellous. And it re-

minded me of one whose life was a pretence, an old man in the streets of London whom I had encountered with Raimundo.

"You smile. Whom are you thinking of?" said Partington.

"Raimundo," I replied.

"At such an hour!" Poor Partington was deeply pained. If he had looked into my heart he would have seen that one of the last persons in it was Raimundo. We may be well armed or badly armed for going through this life, but do we ever learn to use the weapons so as not to hurt our friends? . . . . Then I explained about Raimundo, that we met one day an old man with a broom who brushed a yard or two of pavement in a dignified, broad street of western London which already was quite clean. Yet he accepted money for his work. And when Raimundo paid him far too heavily I caused my comrade to break into smiles by saying it would be a good plan if we made this greybeard sweep the road in front of us from there to the Excelsior Theatre.

"What made you recollect that episode?" asked Partington. He was astonished.

"Will you also smile a little bit?" I said. "When I was gazing up into the Milky Way just now I thought about the men and women who continually had pretences. It would be a pleasant spectacle if they would be compelled for evermore to sweep the Milky Way. I feel to-night,"

I said, "as if I am as far above pretences as the sky is over me."

"You are an angel from the sky," said the beloved Partington.

. . . . . .

Very early the next day I was awake, observing Mr. Partington, who lay beside me. It would be a tale of the good barrel, quite an endless tale, if I were to repeat all the ideas I had as I sat up in bed and watched his countenance. The flame of my affection was increased immediately, because he was unshaven. The dear Partington was mine so utterly that I could see him when the world must wait until he was prepared. I always had thought highly of the chin, which was his most distinctive feature, but I felt now as if I would like to fondle every tiny hair. . . . I said within myself, "I do not love his face so much because of any beauty. Let me be as candid as I have been all this night and tell myself the reason why his face attracts me so." . . . Maybe you will remark that I must be a person with the coldest blood, that I should wish at such a time to probe into my feelings. But I say God is my witness that the truth is just the opposite of this; for I have seen so many lovers lose their love and it might be that I would suffer the same fate. I therefore wanted now at this great moment to set down the reasons of my love, so that if in days to come I should unhappily be alienated from this man I might be able, by recalling those

old reasons, to—how shall I say it?—wave my hands affectionately to the past. What has disappeared will not return and it is more than foolish if we try to bring it back. I have heard about a rose tree on the outer wall of a cathedral which has lived a thousand years; I think that when two people love they plant a rose tree and they never think that it will die. But is it not more prudent if they pluck some of the roses and preserve the fragrant petals? That is what I believe; and at a time when many other girls would not have thought of analysing their beloved one any more than if he had been God, I undertook to gather and preserve some radiant loveliness of Mr. Partington. . . . And so that I could see it the more calmly I got out of bed and went across the room to the bow-window. I picked up the book of Flemish sermons which was lying open on the floor, I smoothed a page which was unfortunately torn and placed the fine, old book upon the wooden seat. I put a cushion for my knees and, just as a few hours before, I laid my arms upon the window-sill. How beautiful that garden was, with misty personages dancing over it. Their fatal hour had come and I knelt watching their unhopeful but invariably graceful struggles with the turbulent, young sun. . . . "O life and death! O Mr. Partington!" I thought. "What am I, Mariposa, but a little, fragile girl? The lawn down there is full of peace; and if they

bury me below it, me with all my agitations, it will still be just as peaceful. . . ."

Suddenly a voice rang through my reverie, the voice of Lady Loseford. "Hullo!" she was crying.

And when I looked down I saw that she was beneath me, she and the head-gardener. He was at her heels; no doubt she had been issuing instructions for a new path that she fancied was required.

I could not keep myself from smiling slightly.

She was troubled, though. Her face grew darker every moment. She was looking at the gardener with trepidation over all her features.

It appeared to me most strange that she should be so nervous. Surely he would execute his mistress's commands. Or had they been, this time, too complicated? Anyhow, I ventured to bring in a little fun. "You have," I said, "so many paths, dear Lady Loseford, that if you or I have half as many to select from on the Day of Judgment I am much afraid that we shall never find the one that takes you up to Heaven."

"Eh, what?" She was quite amazed. "You'd better talk about yourself," she said. And then she stopped herself from saying more and, with extreme uneasiness, she glanced at the head-gardener.

Of course I should have recognized before this that poor Lady Loseford was distracted in perceiving that I was not in the room where she had

put me, but in Mr. Partington's. And obviously she was most of all afraid that the head-gardener had noticed this. But in his face there was no sign that he had noticed anything. How should he know indeed which room was mine? This thought struck Lady Loseford also, I could see; for she dismissed him just as if she had no cares, and then in a hoarse whisper said that she would meet me in my room.

I turned away with the intention to remain one moment by the side of my beloved; but our talking had awakened him. He lay there on the bed, the bed-clothes pulled up so that I could scarcely see him, and he groaned and groaned.

"My dearest one," said I.

"Go, go! she wants you."

"You are angry with me?"

"But you mock me," he replied. Then he sat up. His face had grown so haggard and in colour it was very like the bed-clothes. "Please don't stop here any more," he begged me. "She is waiting for you."

"As you wish," I said, and left the room. However, I had not gone three steps down the corridor when it occurred to me that he was looking as if he would take his life. So I ran back. He was in a paroxysm of despair; his arms were round the pillow and his fingers were endeavouring to strangle it.

So there was I between those two good people, Mr. Partington and Lady Loseford. I naturally

would not leave my lover if I was not certain he would not commit a folly. So I took him, trembling as he was, in my embrace and spoke some words of comfort. Whatsoever might occur, I said, I never would desert him. Let him be assured of that.

"My darling girl!" said he. "But you must leave me for ten minutes. . . . Only, Mariposa. . . ."

"Yes," I said, "my very dearest one."

"Say that you don't detest me."

I would have laughed aloud; but this, I saw, would pain the man. And therefore I did nothing more than kiss my hand at him. I kissed it fervently.

But he was not yet satisfied. "Saint Chrysostom," he moaned, "Saint Chrysostom. . . ."

"I know, I know," said I. "He thought that nothing gives more pleasure than the conquering of concupiscence of the flesh."

"And we——"

"Oh well," I said, "if you don't conquer it, that also gives some pleasure." And with that I left the room.

. . . . . .

Inside my own room, with the door shut, I found Lady Loseford like a wild one pacing up and down. With her right hand she was imitating the conductor of an orchestra; but this was only to assist herself in thinking. After I had entered she strode quickly to the door and locked

it. What was going to happen next? If she attempted to chastise me in the way my mother did I would resist. How had I incommoded her by sleeping somewhere else? So I took up my stand against a wall and watched her keenly. But her eyes avoided mine. Then she ran over to the bed and threw it all into confusion, after which she flopped onto a chair and sighed triumphantly. She now was so relieved that the remainder of her self-control deserted her and the poor lady wept. They were the tears of one who is exhausted. I am sure that she was not the kind of woman who permits herself to weep, except on very rare occasions. All her body shook; and I resolved to soothe her if I could.

So I sank down beside her and I said: "All right, all right."

She smiled a little through her tears and said the same words I had used. The situation was too complicated for my knowledge of the English tongue; so we continued murmuring at intervals "All right," which was the truth, for gradually Lady Loseford grew serene, and so did I.

Then we were interrupted by a knock, which caused her to get up and let the maid come in. They briefly spoke to one another. Doubtless Lady Loseford made her understand that Spanish women often liked to wear their evening gowns quite early in the morning. Anyhow, the maid proceeded with her work in the most tranquil fashion. Presently she took a towel, made a

sign to me and I was going after her towards the bath-room. Lady Loseford followed us; and while the maid was busy with the water my dear hostess patted me in the most friendly manner on the back and went her way.

CHAPTER XIII

AS soon as I had dressed myself I hurried off to Mr. Partington's bed-room; but as he was not in it I went down the stairs and out into the garden. There between the rhododendrons of the drive he and the captain were together and conversing very earnestly. I hastened after them, but it was not until I was ten yards away that they looked round.

"Ah, yes," said Captain Jennings, "that woman from Georgia. She told me that the people in her part of the States talk from their chest and not at all through their nose."

"And what did you say to her?" asked Mr. Partington.

"She had a couple of admirers when she was a girl, the one a local youth, the other one from somewhere in the West; her family could always tell at breakfast which of them had been to see her on the previous evening. You see, their mode of speech was so infectious."

"My good captain," I put in, "but you were speaking about something else before I came."

He coughed. I waited, but he went on coughing. In the middle of it he pulled out his watch.

"By Jove," he cried, "how late it is! The breakfast will be getting cold." These last words he said across his shoulder.

"Look here!" I exclaimed, and I believe I stamped my foot. "Do you think I will allow you to treat me in this way? Stop at once!"

He did so. "But, my dear young lady," he began.

"What were you saying," I demanded, "to this gentleman? He is my husband, very soon he will be."

Captain Jennings was the sort of man who would do nearly anything in order to avoid a scene. He must have blessed the dog which trotted up just then, and while he was engaged in greeting it he turned such dog-like and appealing eyes to me that I had pity on him. But I wanted Mr. Partington to know that he need not be agitated. Therefore I remarked that Lady Loseford had that morning been particularly nice to me.

"I was afraid that we had made a turmoil in this house," I said, "but that is not so."

"At all events," said Captain Jennings, with a fluttering kind of laugh, "*you* don't appear to be in any turmoil."

"Well, why should I be?" I asked.

"Of course, of course," he said.

"We might go in. Let us go in," said Mr. Partington.

The captain coughed again. I am quite sure he would have coughed before commanding the survivors of a siege to make the desperate, theatrical attempt to cut their way through; and then he himself would valiantly have led them. "Perhaps I might tell you," he said, "that my sister——"

"But I told you," I broke in, "I know already. She is a very good woman."

"She has never been abroad very much," said the captain. "Only three or four times to the Riviera and to a place called Le Touquet in the north of France. I don't suppose she ever talked to a foreigner when she stayed at those places, except to hall-porters and chamber-maids. The consequence is that she is ready to believe the most romantic things about all other foreign people. She doesn't expect them to act as we do. She would even be disappointed."

By this time we had reached the front door of the house and there we halted.

"So," I said—it seemed to me that I was dancing once again, not merely dancing on a wooden stage but in a more delightful way, high up among the fascinating clouds—"so if I had not gone to Mr. Partington," I said, "she would not have been pleased."

"That's not really what I meant," the captain answered.

"But more or less," I said.

"Well, more or less," said he.

I assure you that of us three people it was I who was enjoying herself most, and Mr. Partington was most embarrassed. He said not a sentence that is worth repeating, though his gestures said a good deal. It was cruel of me to prolong that conversation, but who knows if he would not have been embarrassed if he had been left with anybody else, or nobody, that morning?

"While my sister," said the captain, "is very broad-minded——"

"For foreigners," I said.

"I was going to say," continued the captain, "that she really is timid with regard to the servants. She wouldn't for the world let them suspect that anything irregular ever happened in the house."

"But if she has romantic ideas, as you call it, about foreigners," I asked, "why won't she let the servants have them?"

"That's how she is made."

"Then everything," I said, "is for the best, because the servants do not know. But let me tell you this: when I went to Mr. Partington's——"

"Oh, can't we," supplicated the distressed one, "can't we talk of something else?"

"In one minute," I replied. "Well, when I went there I was ready for whatever might arrive. I didn't care at all. I had put my spurs on."

"Good Heavens!" said the captain. "Then the maid——"

I laughed, and when I thought about my mother I laughed more, as she was always fond of sayings. "It is nothing but a saying," I explained. "It means that I was ready for the business, not that I put real spurs onto my feet before I went to bed."

Sir William came along the drive. I think he had been to the stables. As it was a Sunday he had clothed himself in sombre things, but that did not even prevent him laughing loudly at the sound of other laughter, though he knew not in the least what it was all about. And then we went into the breakfast-room.

Lady Loseford, who was at the far side of the round table with her back to the window, cast her "Good-morning! There you are!" vaguely at us, for which purpose she removed her lips for a moment from the large glass of hot water that she was slowly drinking.

There was some slight conversation while the men went searching round the room for food; but afterwards the conversation languished, though Sir William, who looked puzzled, did his best to fill the gap. Just like his brother-in-law, he found the dog most useful. As that creature came in at the open window and received the titbits and caresses that were lavished on him he was

wise enough to take the gifts of Fortune and not worry as to why they fell with such abundance on that morning. It was such gay weather that the deepening gloom around the breakfast-table was quite painful.

Suddenly our hostess seized a letter and, as if she were in Mrs. Mason's cottage, began to read it. All I understood was that it was about a dentist. But it was a thoroughly successful letter, since it brought the sunshine onto all their faces. After she had finished Lady Loseford rose, said something about church and looked from face to face, but did not seem to care profoundly whether they resolved to go or not. When she looked at me she hesitated, then asked Captain Jennings to arrange it if I wished to go to Mass.

And so we drove—it was a long way—to a little chapel of my Church. Captain Jennings held the reins and on the seat behind him, which was at an equal height to his, were Mr. Partington and I. We rolled along through very pretty country and they told me all about that dentist. Some old friend of Lady Loseford's had been visiting a German picture-gallery and had described a picture painted by a Dutchman, Teniers the Younger. In a corner stood a fellow, meanly clad, his hand up to his face; the pain had not subsided. But the chief attention of the public was directed towards a very sump-

tuous figure that was sitting in the middle of the picture on a sort of throne. This was the dentist, a grave gentleman with a long beard and a most thoughtful countenance. From under a vast cap of gorgeous fur the venerable man was gazing straight out of the picture; round his body was a robe of very splendid fur and in his hand, as if it were a sceptre, he held up an iron instrument upon the end of which there was the tooth. . . . It seemed that Lady Loseford's friend had very much enjoyed this picture though she was not sure what Teniers meant by it.

"He was poking fun at the dentist," said the captain, "to make him into a sort of King. I suppose he implies that the old gentleman went upstairs, after he'd got out the tooth, in order to fetch that wonderful fur cap to be painted in. A dentist of that period wouldn't in the ordinary course of things, I suppose, wear his fur cap in the house."

"Don't you think," said Mr. Partington, after a few moments, "don't you think that Teniers saw the pathos of the old man, that a fine old man should make himself a guy?"

"But if he hadn't had that weakness," said the captain, "he would have had another. You may call it pathos if you like, yet a human being without weaknesses would be rather inhuman."

Mr. Partington was opening his mouth and as

he did so he glanced at me. I shook my head, so that it was not he but I who answered Captain Jennings.

"Have you ever met any of those inhuman ones?" I asked.

He flicked the horses meditatively with his whip. "I suppose," he said, "that the more you know of anyone the more you penetrate into his weak points. But that sounds like a platitude."

"I don't know," said I, "what is a platitude. "I do, however, know that a woman—but I won't say it is so with other women—I know the sort of man I love." And I pressed the hand of Partington, he pressed mine too and we were satisfied.

"I could introduce to you a man in London," said the captain, "who is less diffident than you with regard to other women. He is a youngish writer, with a haggard kind of face and not much hair upon his head. He is reputed to know—and I don't believe he has disclaimed it—more about women than any other person in the country or the world. I'm sure he does know a lot, and I'm only sorry that it seems to have prematurely aged him."

"But does he tell in public everything he knows," I asked, "and is he still allowed to have his liberty?"

"I hear that on the public platforms of

America," said Jennings, "he was most successful: he replied to all, or nearly all the little papers that were handed up to him. But here in his own country he is sometimes treated like the proverbial prophet. I saw that someone in reviewing one of his clever, lively books, said of him that he accepts his own intuitions about the conduct of young ladies with considerable *naïveté*."

We drove on and on. It was not only beautiful but very tidy. There was no such wilderness, no *despoblado* as there is in Spain. It looked as if the chief thought of the trees and of the smiling meadows and the hedges was to do exactly that which they had been created for and not to lose themselves in idle dreams. The hedges, for example, were like the police of England, just as nice to contemplate and just as useful in reminding us of where we should and where we should not go.

"I am very glad we're driving over there," the captain said. "I hope you like this country."

Were the people as well regulated? Did they never stray and had they nothing savage, nothing unexpected in them? Were they so superior to us? And especially superior to me who had accomplished nothing of my great intentions. I, who wanted to go dancing over England, as it were—what had I done? . . . Would I appear at all in London? And if I did not ap-

pear what mockery would they not heap on me who was so different from themselves! Oh, would that I were like an Englishwoman who would not go wandering from the path.

"Well damn it!" said the captain. "Oh, I beg your pardon, but if you don't want to talk I won't talk either."

The beloved captain! He had shown me that there was a *despoblado* in the English character, at all events in him.

. . . . . .

I want to have good memories of Lady Loseford's, for she was so kind to me; and therefore I pass over that long Sunday afternoon and evening which were not of the most agreeable. There was—or did I fancy it?—about the place a species of embarrassment. And I did not feel that I had escaped from it until I sat with Mr. Partington on Monday morning in the train. I was so glad to be with him alone that I sat on his knee immediately; and when he begged that I should wait until the train had started he had such a face that I could not help laughing. But the guard, whose face was quite unmoved (except his eyes) did not address us as he locked us in.

When we had spent some time embracing one another, I became more serious and said that it was opportune to think about my future.

"I shall ask your mother as soon as we get up," said Partington. "I hope she——"

"*Hombre!* It's not that I mean," said I, "but the future of my feet. Are you of the opinion that I shall perform in England?"

"But why not?" he cried. "They would be fools if——"

"I think if Mr. Wainwright still had faith in me," I said, "he would not let me run about like this. I would prefer," I said, "if you see Mr. Wainwright rather than my mother. Something must be done."

"And something shall be done!" said Partington.

"Because," I said, "I feel like one of those small threads which float upon the air, blown hither and thither by the gusts of wind."

"What else," said Mr. Partington, "are any of us?"

"Do you think so?" I said.

"I am sure of it," said Partington.

Then for a time we talked so softly, so deliciously of other things. He said that years ago, long years ago, he had been certain I would come and I replied that I had often dreamed of him.

"Since when," he whispered, "have you dreamed of me?"

"I never dreamed of anybody else," I said.

"And that Raimundo?"

"He is dire. How can you speak of him?"

"Forgive me. . . . But how fast," he said,

"this train is going! We shall soon be up in town with all those wretched people."

"Are you very, very fond of me?" I said.

"I never knew," said he, "that I could be so fond of anyone."

"Perhaps you can't," said I. "But if you think you can, that is a very good thing too."

He gazed at me with admiration and he smiled.

"I know what you are going to say," I said, "but if you ever lived in Andalucia you would find that we have salt. The other people sometimes think that we say words that are bewitched, but it is merely salt."

He looked out of the window, smiling still. "I see the years," he mused, "when we shall live together. . . . Ah, it will be glorious."

"Take care that you are not the knife for your own throat," I said. "One cannot live on salt and only salt."

"I have no fear," said he, "of anything. . . . But see, we certainly are going faster."

"If it is true," I said, "that everybody loves the lover, do you suppose that they love you enough, the other passengers, to let the train go slowly?"

"I remember once," he said, "in Sligo where I was with several friends. We were coming up a branch line and, according to the railway-guide, our train was marked to bring us to a junction fifteen minutes earlier than the express. But we were told that very often one arrived

just after the express had gone. So at an intermediate station I went to the engine-driver and I gave him half-a-crown and promised him another one if he would see to it that we were punctual."

"But doesn't it depend," I said, "upon the signal-men?"

"All that I know," said Partington, "is that we bumped along so fast that we could scarcely eat and ran into the station forty minutes earlier than it was stated in the guide. And if I had my own way now," he said, "I willingly would bribe the man to make us forty minutes late."

"But as it is," I said, "we are wasteful even with the little time that he allows us."

. . . . . .

Because he said he could refuse me nothing Mr. Partington came straightway with me from the station to the theatre. He said he did not think that it was wise, as Monday morning was a bad time for a business man, if one was anxious to persuade him.

Most scornfully I answered that my object was not to persuade.

And when we reached the theatre it looked at once as if my Partington was right, because they told us a rehearsal was in progress and that we would have to wait. I thought the fellow at the entrance was more nonchalant than he had ever been with me; so I made known to him that I would go to the rehearsal. But he held his ugly

hand up, just as if I were a motor-car. And then, perceiving that the righteous indignation would not be suppressed in me much longer, he explained in rapid English to my Partington why he was forced to act in that way. Who would have believed it? There was a rare dancer come from Spain, he said. He said from Spain. And nobody—he had the strictest orders—was to be admitted in to the rehearsal.

"Carajo!" I exclaimed, when I had gathered this abominable news. *"Carajo* and the seven demons! What of me?"

"Oh, please restrain yourself. They'll hear you on the stage," said Partington.

"Get out there!" roared the door-keeper. But he was not addressing me. A newsboy had been startled by the terrible commotion and had thrust his head in.

I was trying to make up my mind what it was best to do. A thousand thoughts were flying through my head. And Partington, as if he were some miles away, was faintly calling me to go with him. A man rushed down the narrow stairs and nearly knocked us over as he rushed on towards the street. It was the advertising manager, young Borax. He had recognised me also, but he had no time to stop. He nodded curtly and was passing on. But, thanks to God, this was not one of those occasions when you wish to make a suitable reply to something insolent and when you only think of it an hour or ten

hours afterwards. I gave the proper answer there and then to Mr. Borax, who could not find time to stop and wish me a polite good-morning. Always be polite to everyone, that is my motto. And I very heartily spat right into his face.

With an incoherent squeal he fled and Mr. Partington was gasping and the door-keeper, he simply stared at me with a wide open mouth.

And I felt slightly comforted, for there I was with all the opposition to me washed away. I thought with pleasure that the good cock crows in every poultry yard. What now was necessary was to pull that Spanish dancer down. That Mr. Wainwright should have got another dancer and not told me anything! I would be just as secret in my preparations for her downfall. I would make a very careful plan, and meanwhile I would walk away with dignity. If Mr. Partington had followed me, what an enormous difference it would have made. If he had only come into the street. I told myself, as I was waiting for him in our taxi, that the hauteur of my carriage may have frightened him. But a man should not be frightened. Possibly I waited half a minute before sending in the driver with his bag. And then I told myself that he was one of those with delicate ideas and that he thought I did not for the moment want his company. So, as I drove away from there, I was not feeling ill disposed towards him. In fact at

the hotel I nearly told my mother that I had resolved to marry him. But I thought it would be more beautiful if he were present, so that we could both kneel down to have my mother's blessing.

CHAPTER XIV

WHILE I had been away for the week-end my mother had been striking up acquaintance with some people of the Worcestershire. There was a curious beginning. She, in perfect ignorance of English ways, had taken down a little pile of underclothes, to darn them after dinner in the lounge. But while she sat with all those people round her she had fallen into meditation and a garment in her hand had slipped onto the floor. A gentleman had picked it up; he much amused my mother by pretending not to know what was the garment. When he saw that she was smiling he smiled also, said a word or two in French, and took a seat beside her. Presently a lady, who was yearning for the lounge to know that she talked French, came over too; and then another lady who was of a sociable disposition—thirty years ago she had been beautiful and everyone was interested in her search for husband number four—unfortunately she was handicapped by being nearly blind—this amiable lady gave up her pursuit that evening and likewise sat down near my mother. She was followed by that corpulent and active woman who had been converted to our Church and who

on that account approved of us. With her there came another resident, perhaps the oldest man, an ardent follower of sport, who when he was not sleeping in his chair and not complaining of the habits of the ancient fossils, as he called them, round about him, always liked to be amused. This group of people, I was told, began to talk to my dear mother, using French. Some of them appeared to have a vague acquaintance with the language; fortunately some of them knew several words which others of them did not know, and thus they helped each other. They worked very hard indeed, my mother said, and they seemed well contented with their labours. As for her, she did not understand a single word. But that, she said, was nothing. The important fact was that these people showed that they were full of friendliness. My mother said it was impossible for anybody to be nicer. We had not been just to all of them. For instance, that one who was married to the little white man, him whom we had called at first the old man of the cows, that woman might be very brazen, very vulgar, very much a snob, but my dear mother said that she was sure she had good qualities as well.

"I am so glad that we came here," my mother said.

She was entirely satisfied. Soon I would end all that. "It is decided," I informed her, "that I shall not dance at the Excelsior. I shall not dance in London."

"The world is wide," she said.

"Thank you very much," said I.

"Yet nowhere," said she, "in the world are people nicer than these people here. Ah!" she broke out with bitterness, "how you exasperate me! Just when I am happy I must go away."

"Of course," I said—I could have struck the woman—" it is a great shame that I should put you to this inconvenience."

"It is indeed," she said with warmth. "And now bend over—I shall punish you. You daughters, nowadays, you give us very little joy. Bend over quickly."

And before I could defend myself she had reversed me and was thumping me as though I were a little child again. The more she thumped the more my wrath evaporated. We were back in those old times. I was her little girl once more. And when she finished I was weeping, but they were the tears of gratitude.

She knew extremely well how I was feeling and the anger in her own breast faded, as it always did on these occasions.

"Ca! who knows," she said, "if one can blame you? I observed it sometimes in your father, to be just the opposite of what he should have been, although in general he was a man such as one does not often meet, as I have told you. But he had his moments of perversity."

"Carissima," said I—and I embraced her fer-

vently—"how much of grief he must have sometimes given you."

"I loved him," she declared. "And may he dwell among the fragrant saints for ever and for ever."

Piously I crossed myself.

"And this I know," said he, "not anywhere today is such a husband to be found."

"Perhaps," I ventured, "there may be——"

"Not anywhere, I tell you. Keep your lips together. You are ignorant of all such matters."

"Some day I shall marry too," I said. I was on fire to tell her of my Partington, but I restrained myself.

"Of course the day will come," she said. "But he is not the man your father was."

"You scarcely know him," I protested, "and you speak like that!"

Her fine, thick eyebrows went up like two arches of our Roman acqueduct. "The girl is mad!" she cried. "I scarcely know him! What shall I hear next? I scarcely know myself perhaps? I scarcely know—but I am glad that your absurdities cannot be heard by Miguel. What? . . . Come here, Mariposa, you are looking strange. What is it? Speak!" She stared at me with growing perturbation. "God! My God!" she screamed, "she has not the five senses any longer! Tell me, will you lie down with some water on your forehead?"

I was too upset to ask her if that was a treat-

ment good for mad ones. To be by myself was what I wanted; so I let her lead me to my room, while she was muttering a prayer. She put the water on my head and then I feigned to be asleep and she went softly to the window and sat down there. So I turned myself in the direction of the wall, on purpose that her gaze should not be on me as I tried to look into the darkness of the future.

I had time enough to think—the rest of that day and the night and half the morning of the second day. And then my mother, who had flitted in and out continually, came and said that Mr. Partington was in the hall. She had replied to him that I was ill, but he refused to go away. She then had said it was impossible for him to see me, but he simply shook his head and sat down in the hall. He had been sitting for at least two hours and so, at last, she had resolved to tell me of it.

"He is my own faithful friend," I said, "and you, of course, my mother most beloved."

"So you will see him," said my mother, "and you can see him by yourself."

"Give me the looking-glass," I said.

"But for that man it doesn't matter."

Nevertheless," said I, "——"

"Well, if you must," said my dear mother, and she brought the glass, the powder and the other requisites. If he had waited for two hours I thought he well could wait a little longer; and it

would not be at all a good thing if he saw me in my unprepared condition. With my mother helping me, although she made occasional remarks that it was foolish, I gave just as much attention to my face as if I were about to dress, and then I did my hair in pretty coils, despite the labour that it was to do it sitting up in bed.

"It would be nice," said I when all was ready, "if I put on my best night-gown." I had bought a very lovely one; it was so perfect that when I had worn it I had dreamed that everyone is most obliging. I had a dream about a woman of an island I had noticed on the map, the island Jersey; and she told me that when every year the yachtsmen of her island held their race from Spain to Iceland all their friends would gather on a hill in Jersey and be very glad to see them pass. I was not sure if Jersey lay in a straight line from Spain to Iceland, but before I mentioned this the woman added that the yachtsmen were the most obliging people. And afterwards I always loved that night-gown.

This time, too, my mother did not criticize. "One should be courteous if one is out of Andalucia," she said, "and as he only once will see you in a night-gown it is well to let him see you in the best one."

After I had slipped it on and re-arranged myself, I thought a few flowers should be lying on the bed.

"The man has got a large bouquet of flowers," said my mother.

"But you didn't tell me," I complained.

"Oh well," she said.

When he appeared it was indeed a very fine bouquet which he was holding. Swiftly my thoughts flew back to that other fine one which they gave me at the station on the night when I first came to London. Yes, I was most thankful I had come, for even if in this and that I had not had success, I never would have met my Partington if I had stayed in Seville. We were smiling so contentedly at one another.

"How beautiful you look!" he said.

"Because I look at you," said I.

He kissed me and his lips were trembling.

"My most dear, it was worth while," I said. "I laugh at all those troubles which have overtaken me. If Wainwright will not have me, you will have me."

"It was my fault that he changed his mind," said Partington. "I shall devote my life to you and try to compensate you for it all, the fame you would have won, the money, the——"

"Kiss me again," I said. "It is because you made of me a better woman that he will not let me dance at the Excelsior."

"Yes, oh yes!"

"Is it not true?" I said.

He hesitated. "As a—as a matter of fact,"

said he, "the dancers and the actresses we have to-day in England are as virtuous as anybody else. Some of them are even painfully virtuous."

"When you think your tooth is safe, you bite a stone," I said.

He blushed a little, as he sat at the foot of my bed. "Yes, that is it," he said, "exactly. Some of the stars of the profession are as chaste as a celestial body. And it's not because you will be chaste that Mr. Wainwright has done this, but because he is sure it will make your dance a failure."

"And that other woman?"

"Concha," said he. "She comes from Seville too."

"What do you say?" I cried. "And do you really mean that he has sent for Concha?" I might have thought of it before. That Concha should replace me! It was a bitter blow.

"He telegraphed to the manager. She told me herself," said Partington.

I ask you, what would you have done? There sat the man upon my bed; and in a very ordinary tone—as if it were about the murder of a Socialist at Barcelona—he remarked that he had spoken to that woman. He had spoken in a friendly fashion to her, so it seemed.

"Perhaps you took her out to tea?" I said.

"Oh no! But what's the matter? Listen to me, Mariposa. It was quite professional. I

merely measured her for dresses that she has to have. Mr. Wainwright——"

I burst into laughter. Round my heart it was as if an icy hand were clutching me; but I sent up a loud shrill laugh. The wreck of everything lay there, and darkness. . . .

"Yes?" said Mr. Partington.

Out of the darkness mocking faces leered at me and laughed and I laughed back at them. With writhing arms they rose and danced; their dresses overcame the darkness, for they shrieked with the most brilliant colourings of Mr. Partington.

"If there is anything," I heard him say, "that I can do?"

My words ran back again into my throat, like little frightened children. . . . I could see that he was stretching out an arm towards me, and I shrank away.

"But I don't understand," he moaned.

Oh, why were such men ever made? This bed, the walls had got more understanding. And to think that I, poor fool, had been so near to him. I shut my eyes against the sight of such a man. . . . Down a long avenue those faces I had seen before had little twisted bodies underneath them. They were scampering about and they were jeering at me and their faces were all one face, that of Mr. Partington. And on the trees and on the sky were spread the brilliant colours of his dresses. How derisively they glared at me!

"But is there nothing I can do?" said the persistent Partington.

Then I compelled myself to speak and very calmly. "Mr. Partington," said I, "you——"

"Must you call me Mr. Partington?"

I did not answer him. "It seems to me," said I, "that you have done sufficient. Let us part in peace. I am so weary. Let us part in peace," I said, "because of what we were to one another."

Underneath the house a train was rumbling. From the time when I had come to London I had never grown so much accustomed to these trains as not to notice them. I used to dream of the romance of men who went about their business in the dark and never for a moment thought of those up in the sunlight whom they were awakening or rocking off to sleep. I used to think that there are people travelling through life, indifferent to other people, but for all that having an effect upon so many of their fellow-creatures. Yet if they are condemned to live their lives in darkness one could scarcely blame them for not being more aware of other people. Thus when trains rolled underneath my bed I often thought with sympathy of men and women everywhere who are wrapped up in darkness. And as I was occupied just then with Mr. Partington, of course the passage of that train brought it about that I felt sorry for him. I resolved to be as kind to him as possible.

"It is not your fault," I said, "that you are that sort of man." As I much preferred that his eyes and my own should not encounter one another I went gliding down into the bed, as if I was exhausted—and, to some extent, I was. I lay there on my back and looked straight up towards the ceiling. "No, it's not your fault," I said.

"Oh, indeed!" said Partington.

"You are a man of darkness. I am very sorry. And now, will you go away?" I said. "I will remember you with friendliness."

He was not grateful, though. "I never heard of such a thing before," he said. "Merely because I exercise my functions as a dressmaker you want to throw me over. Why on earth shouldn't I attend to this, this——"

"You know her name," said I, "as well as I do."

"And what of that?" said he. "You really are in a most unreasonable frame of mind. Is it right, because other things have annoyed you, that you should behave towards me in such a way?"

I watched the sunlight as it kissed the ceiling tenderly. It whispered that I should continue to be very patient. 'So I will explain it you," I said. "If you had always been a dressmaker, then I would like you very much. If you had not performed the functions of a lover. . . . So

put wings upon your feet and go away. And I will think of you hereafter, as I said just now, with friendliness."

He still could not make up his mind. "You mean," he said, "I am to go away for ever? Just because——"

I started pushing myself up, because I felt that I would be obliged to speak a little of what there was in my mind. But even then I gave him one more chance. I pointed to the door and not imperiously.

He did indeed jerk back an inch or two; yet he was unaware of it. He tried to laugh. But that was only the slight gurgle of a fountain which was not in order. "It's—it's," he said, "it's like one of those American States where they divorce you for—I don't know—the way you cut your hair—or—or something just as idiotic."

"Oh, you talk and talk!" I said. "It was my hope to have a pleasant memory of you. In years to come I would have said, 'He did it not through malice, but through stupidity.'"

"How very kind of you," said Partington. A nasty gleam was in his eye. "But don't you see," he said, "that if a woman really loves a man she doesn't mind his being stupid? In fact she may——"

My kindness had been utterly without result. How foolish of me to have thought that he was made of good enough material, that he would seize the opportunity of riding peacefully away

and leaving with me an agreeable remembrance. Yes, I was a triple fool to have expected it. "Be gone!" I cried—and I did not restrain my gestures any more—"remove yourself! Go, nestle in the stinking armpits of the devil! Absolute brute! Son of the great harlot! Most wretched animal! You drunkard of the cesspools! Lunatic and savage and leper and assassin! You foulest moth devouring pages of a holy book! Oh, shameless and detested ruffian! Fool and imbecile! You father of the crooked plum-tree! Lamentable comrade!"

Saying not a word, incapable of answering, the man moved gradually to the door. It was as though a wintry blast was driving him, one of the storms that pierce you as they rush down irresistibly from the wild places of those fearful peaks, the Sierra Nevada.

He was going, going. He was bowed. It was a pitiable sight. So I would let him go in peace. Abruptly I brought my remarks to a conclusion. But it had been written that I should enjoy his going out. He was so thoroughly bewildered that he did not know that he was grasping still the beautiful bouquet which he had brought me. As he neared the door he put his arm up, as if he was trying to protect himself against my observations. And I hope he did not hear my burst of laughter. Anyhow he vanished with the flowers.

. . . . . .

One night I told Captain Jennings all about this episode. He and his nephew Hubert and myself were at a dance, because I wanted everyone to see that I could live quite well without appearing under Mr. Wainwright. Stories might be in the air that I was desperate with grief or that perhaps I had destroyed myself. I was—I will confess—very wretched for a little time; but I was much consoled by my dear mother who reminded me that ravens can't be blacker than their wings. What was there worse that now could overtake me? I had lost my place at the Excelsior and he whom I had loved had disappointed me. So very surely there must come about for me far better things. I wondered what exactly they would be. I asked my mother.

But she warned me not to be excited.

"Yes, but shall we go somewhere," I said, "to some other country? Or what shall we do?"

"We shall be led," quoth she, "by God, and until then we have to wait. And it is just as good to wait for that in London as in any other town."

I think I must have looked uncertain, for she told me not to be an impious girl. Already we had seen, she said, that God was taking care of us. Had Mr. Wainwright not been very generous to us in money matters?

It is true that he had sent the manager, Augustus Drake; and that official, who was rather

wooden, had attempted to fulfil his master's orders and apologise. I said I did not wish to hear why Mr. Wainwright had rejected me. Then Mr. Drake delivered to me an important cheque. My mother had been very satisfied.

And I had been amused by Mr. Drake's embarrassment.

"When money speaks the rest are silent," said my mother. "He did well," she said.

But though we had this money I had thoughts of other things. It would be necessary, if we still remained in London, to let people see that I was totally indifferent to Concha. Captain Jennings recommended that I should henceforward go about more than I had done.

"Go about," said he, "and look serene. Of course," he said, "you might insert a notice in the papers, you might say that you are unable to dance at the Excelsior on account of—anything will do. Just like all those people who publicly regret in the *Morning Post* that they didn't go to a garden-party at Buckingham Palace."

"Even those who were not invited?" I asked.

"That wouldn't be usual," said the captain. "Or else you put in a kind of legal notice on the front page of *The Times*. I could get a solicitor to draw it up, saying that in pursuance of a relative's will you had abandoned public dancing."

"But I haven't abandoned it," I said, "for ever."

"For ever is a long time," said Captain Jennings. "There are people who put in a notice that they change their names and I daresay that they occasionally change them back again. I heard, for example, of someone called Einstein who announced that he wished to be called Instone. Good for him. And if at some future time, because of the renown of Professor Einstein, he should want to reconsider his decision—well, why not? So if you like to put in a paragraph? Or else Hubert and I would be delighted to take you out a bit, as we used to in the good old days before—before——"

"We will not talk about that man," I said. "He is no longer in my life."

"Oh, certainly," said the captain.

But I found that I had to tell the whole affair to someone; and the only person I could tell it to was Captain Jennings. We were sitting at a dance in the conservatory. For some time, when I had told him of the treacherous behaviour of Luke Partington in measuring that Concha woman for a dress, he sank into profound reflection. So, while he was thinking it all over in his mind, I looked at the long ferns and plants, the rocks that were so cunningly disposed and the small coloured lights which had been scattered here and there. Now that I had told the captain I was perfectly relieved and I was glad to occupy myself with other things. Life was more pleas-

ant than five minutes earlier; I clapped my hands together joyously on seeing those peculiar flowers —I have forgotten what you call them—which imprison and consume the flies that enter them.

The captain was astonished. "If that is how you feel," he said, "then——"

I informed him that my joy concerned a plant and had not anything at all to do with Partington.

"I see," he said. "And really I must say," he added, "that you wash him from your heart with wonderful facility."

"It is all finished with him now," I said.

"But don't you think," said Captain Jennings, "that you have been just a little bit precipitate?"

"If you have a thing to finish," I replied, "then surely— And moreover—but I think," I said, "that I will dance now with your nephew."

So I launched myself once more into the whirlpool of the ball-room. If I live to be as old as many of the dancers I shall never be expert in ball-room dancing. It requires, assuredly, that you should let the man be like the pilot of a ship; but I am always like a ship that does not answer to the pilot very well. It seems I cannot school myself to be of a more yielding disposition. And thus it happens we collide with other couples. Also I am interested in the people. And I think it is worth while to have one's ankle grazed or have them stamping on your toes or any other

slight occurrence if one has been entertained by those revolving men and women. I suppose there are some people who sit at the windows of their room and thence make observations of the folk outside—and some of them may even think they need not look. If I have acted otherwise it is because that is my nature; and I do not say my system is a better one. It may be good—I think it is—to mingle with the people you are studying; but also it may be a bad thing if you mingle with them in the dance, at any rate, a bad thing for your body. Yet how I enjoyed myself that evening! Of course I could examine once again that little old man of the military rank who, with his grey hairs streaming at the back of his bald head, runs many kilometres round his partners. Does he look so anxious at the thought that Death is running faster? And the tiny foreign painter—there he was, of course, not looking anxious as he danced, but smiling gallantly, though he was saying, I believed, that he preferred the payment to be made beforehand. Then I saw a fairly young and very bulky fellow with a strong nose and an eye-glass, who was gurgling all the time with laughter, and the pretty woman with him shared his mirth. My partner said that in the War the fat one's work was in a humble office at Versailles and he became a captain and he still continued now, since it was not against the law, to style himself a captain. May-

be it was that which made him laugh so gustily. Upon a sofa in a corner of the room there sat a senile man. I wondered what had brought him there, the poor old fellow. He seemed to have a very vague idea of what was going on around him. But he grinned and grinned—it was most terrible. And then I heard of him that he was one day at his club and in the hall he found two dogs, a thin one and a fat one. The possessor of the thin one was a commoner, they told him, while the fat one's owner was a marquis. "I want two biscuits," said the aged man; and when they came he gave them to the fat dog, both of them. And another couple whom I watched was a dark, handsome woman in the company of a demure old man, half hare, half doll, who babbled to her very eagerly about some ornaments. Her thoughts were brooding on eternity and he was talking as if everything depended on the colour of a certain vase upon the terrace of her country house. She smiled because eternal things could never frighten her and he continued breathlessly, though feeling reassured, as she would evidently not as yet transfer the generous patronage that was his livelihood. Another couple that amused me was a dashing woman with her cavalier. I was informed that she had written to the hostess that she would not come except in case this man should come as well; and he had written he would only come in case the lady stayed away. . . . Such were a few of those who danced around me.

And presently I was back again in the conservatory, sitting at the side of Captain Jennings. "So my friend," said I, as I remarked his altered mood, "you do not think that I am such a wicked one?"

"Of course not. I have just been saying to myself," he said, "that when I fancied that I understood you I was boasting to myself."

"But that is better, is it not?" said I, "than if you had boasted before the multitude."

"It certainly is," said the captain. "What I deserve," said he, "is the fate of the Italians in Corfu after the Great War. That is an entirely Greek island, you know, with a first-rate harbour, so that the Italians wanted it. For a time in the Middle Ages it was held by the Venetians, but it had been Greek before the birth of Christ."

"Ha!" I declared, "that is most excellent."

"Yes, before the birth of Christ," said he.

"Most excellent," said I, "that you should have thrown all your melancholy down the wind."

He shrugged his shoulders. "What's the use of it?" he asked. "But I was saying, the Italians wanted Corfu for themselves and they have no more right than we have to Anjou or Maine or any other parts of France we used to hold. But we recognise, thank Heaven, when——"

"Gibraltar," said I.

"Oh, that's quite different," quoth he. "What was I saying? Yes, that the Italians wanted to

remain on Corfu permanently. And they boasted that they would."

I let my fan glide for a little down the captain's arm. "Of all the persons who are here to-night," I said, "there is not one who is discoursing in the way that you do. It is better than the newspaper to hear you talk."

"That's very kind of you," said the captain. "I only meant to tell you about those Italians. They boasted that, although the other Allies would not stay in Corfu very long now that the War was over, they for their part wouldn't leave until a certain cock should crow. There is a mediæval cock upon a wall of the old fortress, a most decorative bird. But at last the poor Italians had to go, and then as many of the natives as could manage it went down into the harbour and, with all the fury of their lungs, stood there and crowed. . . . That comes," said he, of "boasting."

"The Italians," I said, "must have been very sorry."

"I am anyhow," said he. "I should have recollected that they called you Mariposa, the butterfly."

There was something, deep down in his voice, that sounded like the tolling of a bell. As we got up my glance was on that flower which eats the flies. Oh, well, I thought, I never heard of one which lives on butterflies.

But afterwards when Hubert took me back to the hotel and he was kissing me, as was his custom in the taxi, I was very tired, so that I lay there and did not care what he did. He only kissed because he thought that that was what a cavalier should do; it was my custom therefore to command him to desist and then he, without any argument, desisted. Yet on this occasion I allowed him to continue, and from how he kissed me I could feel that he was wondering how long he ought to keep on doing it.

That sound in Captain Jennings' voice—was it so bad to be a butterfly? And was my whole life something to regret?

A poor, stray dog ran slantingly across the road, so that the driver of our taxi had to swerve this way and that in order to avoid it. And as the man went onwards he was swearing.

I looked out of the window to see if the scared creature had been hurt. But it was trotting peacefully along the footpath. Peacefully and humbly, and it seemed to say, "I beg you not to swear at me. I am sorry that I gave you any trouble. I am only a poor wanderer."

"Is he all right?" asked Mr. Hubert. "He might have upset us very easily."

By this time the animal was out of sight, but as I leaned back in the taxi I could hear a message coming to me through the air: "I am only a poor wanderer. I am your brother."

"Kiss me! Kiss me!" I whispered to Hubert.

"But you are crying!" he said. "Do tell me what is the matter."

I shuddered.

"They'll probably take it to the Dogs' Home at Battersea to-morrow," said Hubert.

CHAPTER XV

MY dear mother was the very opposite of those, the fashionable ones to-day, whose aim in life is to transfer themselves as rapidly as possible from where they are. And she was loth to start from England on account of all those people at the Worcestershire Hotel. She never in her life had had such a success. A few of them would every evening sit beside her in the lounge and talk their broken French and beam at her; and she would nod at them and wear a look as if she knew they were the nicest people in the world. I sometimes had the impious thought that she was like the statue of a saint in a cathedral, with worshippers all round her; but even if the worshippers do not obtain what they desire one must believe that the good saint can understand them. My dear mother said that she was far too old to learn the English language or the French.

Not only did my mother sit there and allow the people to address her. She was on occasion not so passive. Once it happened, for example, that three ladies and gentlemen were playing bridge. The gentleman appeared to be amused,

he said he played in order to enjoy himself; (how nice to be that gentleman, because I heard it said of him that that was also why he wrote his books). Well, one of the three ladies played as if the slightest loss would be recorded on the Judgment Scrolls of God. As she was playing badly she was in despair; her mouth was twitching, and she suddenly and harshly told the gentleman that either he must be more serious or she would throw her cards down. She was sorry, so she said, to be unpleasant. Then my mother went across and patted both of them upon the shoulder. The result was that they smiled as they continued with the game. (Myself I think it very possible that the rebuking lady acted under provocation, for a friend of mine in the hotel had told me of that gentleman, that he was far from being an adept. This friend of whom I have not spoken yet, because she did not come into the tale, was a dear, little woman, Mrs. Morgan. We were not much troubled by the fact that we spoke different languages, because we used our eyes and eyebrows and what not, and said with our eyes what we could not have spoken. With her husband, though, I could conduct a halting conversation—he addressed me in a language which he said was Portuguese—his ancestors and he were occupied in shipping wine from Portugal, and when he was not shipping wine I think that he was nearly always playing bridge. I watched him sometimes.

The more tired he was from his day's work—I don't know if he had to drink much port—so much the more brilliant was his play. Mrs. Morgan, on the other hand, used to prepare herself for the evening's game by going right through two or three of those novels during the day.)

As I was saying, my dear mother had so much success that it was difficult to make her come away. We had sufficient funds from Mr. Wainwright and she would not let herself be troubled by the thought of leaving London. In the end, though, she consented to go travelling with me to North America; and most unhappily she died there. I will not say more about it now; because it is a story by itself and I may tell it you another time.

A New York impresario had come to London. He was like a courtier of the Middle Ages. It surprised me that a business man from North America should be like that. He bowed so much and rubbed his hands so much that I forgot to ask him why he wanted me who was rejected by an English theatre. He came again the next day and informed me that it was Raimundo who had sent him. My old friend and enemy, Raimundo —why should he do this? The impresario had no idea. Raimundo was an old acquaintance and as soon as he had known about the impresario's arrival he rushed off to see him, for the purpose of exciting him by stories of a wondrous dancer. I

had had some quarrel, he explained, with Mr. Wainwright. And he recommended this man not to lose a moment in engaging me.

"But it is we," I said, "who quarrelled. I have not been friendly with Raimundo for a certain time. And what is there behind it all?"

"Who knows?" said he. We had been talking half in Spanish, half in English. After he had said these words in English he translated them. *"Quien sabe?"* said he; and it seemed to give him such great pleasure that he said it four or five times in succession, while he bowed and smirked.

"I believe," said I, "that you yourself know very well."

He fluttered with his hands.

I told him we must clear that up before we spoke of other things. And then he looked like a conspirator and said that he believed, in fact he knew, because he had it from Raimundo, that they were afraid I would commit an act of violence, and so they wanted me across the ocean.

"Which of the two women is he with?" I asked disdainfully.

"He didn't tell me," said the impresario.

"He and someone else are frightened, that is all I know. But I can see that you don't mean to have anything to do with them."

"I care for them as much," I answered, "as the donkey for the thunder."

"And if you come over to the States," he said, "and let me help you to become a famous woman——"

"That is just what Mr. Wainwright said," quoth I.

"But Wainwright, Wainwright—— Listen to me. I'll draw up the kind of contract that you simply won't be able to refuse."

It seemed to me peculiar that he should do all this without so much as asking me to dance before him.

"Raimundo's good enough for me," he said. "But if you'd like to dance a bit I'd be as glad," said he, "as anything."

The other point was that he might not know how I had modified my dancing. So I started telling him how I had settled to be good and not to do the dance of passion.

"Oh, that's all right," said he. "I daresay, after all the trouble it has brought you, that you won't persist with your new style."

"I have been steadfast up to now," said I.

"That's it," said he. "When I translate the contract to your mother she'll be dancing too," said he.

I wondered what would happen when they met each other, for they both were equally determined. It was just as if a rope were fastened round my waist with one end in my mother's hand, to keep me where I was, and one end in the impresario's,

to pull me over to America. Which of the two would win? Before the conversation came to pass I gave the impresario some valuable advice, as I myself was eager for him to succeed. There is, I think, a proverb saying, "Out of evil springs the good"; at all events there is a proverb more or less to that effect. And why should I not gather something good out of the apprehensions of Raimundo? My departure would for him be only an imagined benefit, for me it would be a most real one. And so, before I called my mother down into the smaller public room at the hotel, I had a profitable talk with the American.

"How much," I said, "do you propose to offer me if I come over?"

He produced the contract I would have to sign. And most impressively he said that if I did not see the figures for myself I never would believe them. So he spread the contract out on the piano, handling it with reverence, and then I leaned there by his side. I knew not if his rather noisy breathing was because he was so fat.

I looked at the first article, on which his finger rested, and I waited for him to interpret what to me was quite incomprehensible. But he began to make a little speech concerning the tremendously fine contract I was going to hear, that such a contract never had been made for any other dancer, but that he was truly anxious——

Then he saw that I was fascinated by the jewel in his ring. "My dear," he said, "we'll cover you with jewels every bit as fine. Now this is what the contract says."

As he recited it I quickly saw that it was excellent. I asked him for a pencil, so that I could write the figures down.

"Ha! ha!" he said—the jewel on his hand was glittering—"a girl like you can't have a head for such things. I will put them down"—he did so with a golden pencil—"but there mustn't be the slightest thought," he said, "that I have got the better of you. If you have no agent I suggest that you should let a lawyer act on your behalf. There are some very good lawyers in London."

"Nevertheless," I said, "I will be thankful if you will read out those figures."

"If they don't bewilder you," said he. And as he read them solemnly I saw myself as I had been, a ragged little girl who rolled about that very dusty part of Seville with her comrades; and I saw myself as I might have concluded, such a poor old woman, blinking with her red eyes at the games of other children and with not sufficient money to procure for seventy-five centavos a nice coloured picture of a saint whereby I would obtain indulgence for a settled period. Assuredly I would have grown into that miserable woman if I had not been so fortunate. And was I safe? Could I not even yet be thrust into the

gloom? The countenance of fortune might be turned away from me. The day might come when everything would not be smooth and easy as it was to-day—mysteriously smooth and easy —and I would have no one to bring help to me, no one to rescue me from the extremities of indigence. So let me take the utmost possible precautions. Heavens, how I was frightened!

"All those sums," I said, "that you have mentioned, I must have the double of them."

"What is that? . . . Oh, yes, I see—you like a little joke. And that's a fine one. Very funny. All my business friends will laugh."

"Perhaps they will," I said, as I drew back from the piano.

He remained there and the eye which he turned towards me was that of a fish.

"Do you agree?" I asked.

"Look here," he said, "I never heard of such a proposition."

Then I told him very calmly that if he consented it would cause my mother to consent. But she was much opposed to leaving London. . . . I found out at last that the ridiculous Raimundo had not merely made this gentleman approach me, but had undertaken that he would himself pay half my salary; and so the impresario accepted my proposal that his offer should be doubled. As I was to learn, he had paid more, considerably more to several other dancers. But when I put

everything before my mother and triumphantly explained to her that I was to receive the double of what had been written in the contract she was so delighted that she did not long resist. And that is how we came to start for North America.

. . . . . .

How could I bear a grudge against Raimundo? He was going to give me half my salary, and his faint-heartedness had made me laugh and laugh.

When Captain Jennings came to say farewell I told him I would like to see Raimundo once again. The captain shook his head. It was impossible, because the previous night had been a fatal one. The newspapers had only up to now a very brief report, to the effect that his dead body had been found at the Excelsior. And the police were actively engaged.

I was for going down at once to see the corpse. We could buy flowers and candles on the way. But Captain Jennings was against it. In the first place they would have removed Raimundo to a mortuary, he presumed; at all events they would not leave him in the theatre.

We tried to telephone, but there was no reply. The woman said that someone else was talking to them. Several times she told us that. And Captain Jennings said that if we went there we would find that no one was admitted to the room in which the tragedy had taken place. He said

there might be something in the next edition of the evening papers.

Meanwhile—as it was all so vague and there was nothing positive to think about—I could not help remembering that it would make a difference to my salary in North America. But I was more than ever anxious not to stay in London. So I settled with my mother that we would accept whatever sum that impresario might chose to give. He sent a little note that afternoon to say that he would not intrude upon my sorrow. And the newspapers had only one more piece of news, and this was that Raimundo had been found beside an altar in a dressing-room. That must be my old room which they had given, I supposed, to Concha. But I had never heard of Concha murdering a man before. And the police, apparently, had not arrested her or anybody else, because the papers simply said that they were very actively engaged. It rather baffled them because he was not wounded and there was no sign of poison. He had taken part, as usual, in the performance. After that, when he should have gone home, he must have come into this room; and nobody had noticed that he did not leave the theatre.

"There is a European crisis going on just now," said Captain Jennings. "I'm no pessimist, but I must say that it has not looked blacker since the War. Millions of people are starving . . . the troops in those countries may make common cause

with them . . . and we should be in the midst of worse horrors than anyone has ever dreamed of. Everything depends upon a handful of men—what they have to do is to stand on the edge of the precipice and keep civilization from rushing over it. More than once during the last few weeks it looked as if all hope was futile."

But how I felt ashamed! "And through this time," I said, "what have I done? I have thought that my own small affairs were of such terrible importance. And I have gone my way as if those things which you have spoken of did not exist."

"My dear girl, said the captain, "I was not thinking about you. After all, the state of Europe isn't your business. But the newspapers —what do they do in this hour of awful responsibility? To-day, with very rare exceptions, they devote a great deal more space to Raimundo than to Europe. Poor Raimundo is dead, but Europe is in danger of dying. . . . Yet maybe the newspapers can't help themselves. They have to write what their public wants to read. One knows pretty well beforehand what they will say. To-morrow morning they will have all kinds of comments on the death of Raimundo. One, for instance, will tell us that in the midst of life we are in death and that at least we should be thankful that we live in Shakespeare's England, which has such a splendid Royal Family. Another one will

say this is the veritable writing on the wall; among the privileged classes there is to be seen such reckless luxury of which a dancing man is only one sad symptom. Where the dancing man was petted, as in Russia, what has come to pass? No good democrat can look unmoved upon the antics of a painted male. He is the morbid germ who gradually will devour the commonwealth; and incidentally his own demise is certain. If Raimundo had not been a dancer but a footballer he might have been alive to-day. Another paper will be sure that at the bottom of it all there is the foul hand of the Hun. If we had been more loyal to the French and to our dead boys who sleep in France, this tragedy, it will declare, would not have happened. . . . You don't follow? Well, at Huntingfold, my sister's village, a young girl, unmarried, had a baby in the middle of the War; and in that paper it asserted that most probably the culprit was a Hun, although there wasn't a prisoners of war camp within thirty miles. They are clever and industrious people, the Germans, but they aren't magicians."

As he spoke my mother came into the room. "I do not believe," she said, "that he has been assassinated by magicians. I have thought about it. Anyone who dies in front of an altar must have offended against God. That is only reasonable. . . . And yet there are occasions when it is not so. Did you ever hear," she said to Captain

Jennings, "of that priest of ours who drank the holy wine and then collapsed and died?"

"I never heard of him," said Jennings.

"He had not even time to spit it out," she said, "and he was one of those very orderly ones who never spit during the Mass except as far as possible away from the altar. He was just like that in everything, a man one had to praise or love, and yet he died as I have told you."

"Shall we ever know the reason of Raimundo's death?" said I.

"But I have told you," said my mother. "You are one of those who never can be satisfied. You give a needle, as they say, and want a ploughshare."

After this the captain left us, saying that he would send word if there was any news. And when he had gone I told my mother, so that she should understand, how very miserable it was that England had been standing by a precipice and that things were blacker than they had been since the War, and that she and I had stopped our ears to it.

She was too much astonished to be angry and, before she had determined how to answer me, I disappeared. The people in the lounge that night were altogether charming. They distracted me with music, not with music of the theatre but with the gentle melodies of Mozart. And they asked me for advice concerning their embroideries.

Then, on the next day, there was still no certainty about Raimundo's death. Young Mr. Borax, the advertising manager, came to the hotel quite early, because he was afraid I would hear a gruesome tale that was going about and he was sure it was untrue. Concha was not yet appearing on the stage and thus her room at night was empty; and malicious people, Mr. Borax said, maintained that it had seemed good to Raimundo, as he was degenerate, to meet that Maisie woman there and be reminded, even as he was embracing her, of me; and then they said my cause had been defended by the Blessed Virgin on the altar, who assumed my features and stepped down just as Raimundo imprinted a final kiss. Softly it was said that she stepped down and murmured in his ear, so that he turned his head and saw what to the eyes of Maisie was invisible. And Maisie's hair turned white, they said, when she looked at his face as it was being kissed to death.

No one ever knew the truth of this affair; but I believe the theory of Captain Jennings, namely that Raimundo climbed up after the performance to that room, unconscious almost where his legs were taking him; and up there in the dark, the captain held, he was so panic-stricken that he died.

. . . . . .

A few months after this, when I came back from North America (with the jewel of the im-

presario's ring) I felt myself a very lonely woman as I reached my native town. It would be pleasant to relate my various adventures, some of them at all events, to Miguel and Don Carlos, who was such a human priest, and any of the neighbours who might care to listen; but while they were lolling on the chairs outside the little shop or leaning up against the dusty tree in front of it, and I was telling them of this and that, and they were filled with wonder and a certain envy, I would have in me a weight of sadness, for I would not hear the garrulous and deep-toned voice of my dear mother. And I would not experience upon my person the shrewd blows I merited, the blows which sent me back again into the days of childhood, the beloved blows which I would feel no more.

That was indeed the only shadow, for I found that Miguel had risen in the ranks of his profession and was now a banderillo, putting darts between the shoulders of the bull, and people said that it would not be long before he was a matador, since he possessed agility and courage and the needful science, all of which a man must have when in the "hour of truth" he stands there and confronts the bull. I found that the increasing fame of Miguel had caused more people than of old to buy their groceries in that small shop of ours; his sister did the work of it, as had been settled when my mother went with me to London, and it happened frequently that Miguel would

take one of the pavement-chairs, so that the customers who cherished an affection for the bulls could have the pleasure of a little talk with him.

As I had foreseen, my journeyings procured me wide consideration, but still more did they give honours to me for the reason that I was regarded as the bride of Miguel. Since he, despite his growing glory, had not altered; since he was as sympathetic as he had been long ago the marriage came about. There was no cause for us to leave the little shop, as he was not yet wealthy and he made me promise that I would not dance in public any more. And so we dwelt in happiness behind the groceries, although I dreamed occasionally of the time when he would have become a matador and when, retiring from that great and perilous profession, we would live in perfect peace together. Out of all the men whom I had known he was the gentlest. Had I married Captain Jennings he would now and then have lost his temper with me, had I married Mr. Partington he would have let me hear stern language, I am sure. But it was otherwise with Miguel, who covered me with kindness. When I told him that the impresario had said that he would cover me with jewels, all he answered was that he was very glad I was not rich.

"It is like the ending of a tale," he said.

"Except that one does not know what the end will be," said I.

That was the afternoon of a September day and later on our friends would come. Not speaking very much, because we had been busy in the heat, we sat before the shop and were content. The green-white awning over us made it endurable.

"Your mother would be glad," said Miguel.

"She knew that you would marry me," I said.

"May God reward her," murmured Miguel. And breaking off a portion of a mass of dates he flung it to some ragged children who were standing near at hand.

"And may God keep you well and strong," said I, "O lover of my soul."

He nodded and he let the rings of smoke curl up out of his mouth into the shining air; and presently he said he trusted that he always would be strong enough for real gold embroidery and silver braid, instead of letting it be painted on his costume, as so many of his colleagues now were forced to wear it, owing to that grievous ailment which they call the "bull-fighters' consumption."

But I thought that painted costumes look as beautiful and are less heavy. It would please me more, I said, if my beloved one did not exert himself too much.

"Ah, well," said he, "and beauty is not everything. That Mr. Wainwright said that you were the most beautiful of women. Yet you did not dance in England."

"It is true," I said.

And then again we sat there in tranquillity and silence. I remember that an aged mule, so full of sores, was driven by and those two ragamuffin children threw at him their date-stones, and the man who drove the poor old creature was quite pleased because it made him move for several steps a little faster.

Gradually there descended over us a pale and solemn light. That dilapidated palm-tree near the shop, which had been standing motionless, as if it was a sentry, now began to stir in the slight evening breeze. The people, who so slowly had been walking past us, were now as if suddenly transformed. *"Adios!* Much felicity!" they called to us and flickered with their fingers in the air.

We pushed the awning up, as it would soon be growing dark. And as we took our seats again I saw Don Carlos rolling towards us. He had evidently been obliged to visit someone in the heat, and as he does not grow less corpulent with age it made one hot again to look at him.

"Now sit you down," said Miguel, "and we will peel you a good orange. They are oranges from elsewhere, but no matter."

One did not have to invite him twice. And as he sank down, breathing hard, he mopped himself with his great crimson handkerchief. I peeled two oranges and while he ate them an old woman,

one of the chief gossips of our quarter of the town, arrived.

"The reverend one is hot," she said.

"He would prefer it," put in Miguel, "if you would leave him to himself."

"And what is there new?" the woman asked.

"Oh, nothing new. Begone!" said Miguel.

"Well, I have something I can tell her," said Don Carlos, as he wiped his mouth and then once more his forehead. "There is someone who was here—I know not when—and he belonged to that unholy sect, the Protestants."

"What did he do?" the woman said, as she sat down.

"Those Protestants," he frowned, "I hear that they have churches of their own."

As I had heard of them in North America, I told the reverend father that they also prayed. "At least," I said, "when I was over there I heard of one who prayed, though it may not be true."

"Nowadays," Don Carlos said, "all kinds of things occur."

"As I was saying," I resumed, "there was a young man over there who was a Christian Scientist, which is another of their sects. They cure themselves without a doctor. This one was extremely ill and so his father, who was not a member of his sect, persuaded him at last to see a doctor. And the doctor said that there must be

an operation. 'Will you let him operate upon you?' said the father. 'Be it so,' the son replied, 'but only if a woman of the Christian Scientists may likewise be there, in the corner of the room, where she will pray.' "

Don Carlos made a sign to Miguel that he could eat another orange. "But go on, I beg of you," he said to me. "That woman of the sect was praying."

"In the corner of the room," I said.

"Do they," asked Don Carlos, "do they do it just like you and me? Did you observe that in America?"

I said I did not know how she had done it, for I was not there. "But when the doctor finished with the operation and wrote out his bill," said I, "it was for a hundred dollars and the woman who had prayed said that her bill was, on the contrary, three hundred."

The gossip-woman was indignant. "I have never yet forgiven Christopher Columbus," she announced, "for having found that land. When we had the war with them the worthy citizens of somewhere, I think Barcelona, tried to pull his statue down. He has a statue there. But what were you, most good Don Carlos, saying of that Protestant when you began to speak?"

He had concluded with his orange and was sitting at his ease. "The Protestant?" he said. "I have forgotten for the moment."

I reminded him that it was one who had been here in Seville, so he said.

"Ah yes!" he cried. "I have him now. He came with Bibles and he wrote a bad and evil book about it, telling how he carried Bibles up and down our country."

"So you have read that book?" I said.

"My daughter," said Don Carlos, "by your being out of Spain I fear that you have lost a part of the respect you owe."

Then Miguel put his arm around me. "It is but an inadvertence, I know very well," he said. "She is the best one in the world."

"So, so," came from Don Carlos," "but she should not say that I have read abominable books like that one. By the love of God, if I began with that where would I end?"

. . . . . .

That night when Miguel and I went to our bed we lingered over the undressing, for it was so beautiful to lean out of the window. Such a multitude of stars were in the velvet sky.

"When I have finished counting them," I whispered, "then, O Miguel, I shall have no more love for you."

My hair was loose. He kissed it and I felt as if each kiss created a bright star that I would proudly wear for ever. And I laid my face on his bare breast and I was happy.

"There is nothing more that we desire," said he.

"And when you are a celebrated matador," I said, "then—but you will be celebrated very soon."

"Things are not as they were," he said. "They talk of using quilted horses, even horses of machinery. The times are bad."

"The times are very good," said I, "since we have found each other."

Far away one heard the voice of the night-watchman, the *sereno*. Soon he would be underneath us with his heavy cloak wrapped round him. Those dark shadows under the straight walls were like so many cloaks. It was as if a little shadow nestled in my heart. But why should I be sad? The dearest man was with me, he was mine. And yet a little shadow—I would sweep it utterly away. To do that I related to my man with laughter, how I might have made Don Carlos very angry if I had informed him of the Flemish priests.

"I had once a friend," said I, "in England and his name was Mr. Partington and he was fond of telling me about those priests and reading pieces of their sermons to me."

"He resembles other folk in England," said my Miguel, "for he was trying to do good to you, just as they also try with their trades-union. We banderillos, like the picadors and simple peons, we have all now our trades-union, and they say the whole idea of it arose in England."

"That may be," I said, "and one day Mr. Part-

ington was laughing as he talked about the Flemish priests."

Miguel was slightly irritated. "What is there to laugh about in priests?" he said.

I told him it was nothing but a little fancy in the head of Partington, who as a rule was not like that. "He is one of those grave Englishmen," I said.

"It pleases me," said Miguel, "to hear it."

"Only once," quoth I, "he said that he was sure that Flemish priests had those enormous frills all round their necks, as one can see the people in old pictures, those enormous, white, uncomfortable frills. And when he thought of Flanders in the Middle Ages or to-day, he said, he saw in front of him a population of the white-frilled men who spent their time in preaching earnestly to one another."

"Ave Maria Santissima!" proclaimed the watchman; and the tingling blows of his long staff upon the cobble-stones accompanied his voice.

"I think in England they do not know much," said Miguel, "about the Middle Ages. But we others who are occupied with bulls were in the Middle Ages until yesterday. Yet even if they alter things, if the police compel us, for example, to conceal with cloths the horses which are lying dead, and if they interfere in several ways, the grand profession will continue, and for ever. I, at any rate——"

"You talk," I smiled, "as if you always will be

fighting bulls. But when you have amassed sufficient money, like that Sanchez Megias, then you will cut your pig-tail off and leave the ring."

"And after I am dead," said Miguel, "and up in Heaven, do you think that I will sit with folded hands? Ah no, there must be bulls in Heaven. They will come careering at me and——"

I laid my fingers on his lips. "Be not so impious," I said.

He pushed my hand away. "How impious? I tell you there are bulls," he said.

"Now listen," I began.

"Oh, this is more," he cried, "than I can tolerate. Will you be quiet?" He was doing all he could to keep himself within control.

Perhaps I should have let him have his bulls, because his voice was rising and the neighbours would be waking up. But I was frightened that if he expressed himself in such a way it would result in his eternal punishment.

He disengaged himself from me and waved his arms about. "I tell you," he exclaimed, "I tell you once again that there are splendid bulls up there."

"I wish," I said, "I could believe you."

"But you shall! Do you believe or do you not?" he almost shouted; and as I was hesitating he seized hold of me and threw me down upon the bed, so that I lay there on my stomach. Then he started to belabour me. His hand came down, his hand came down. I swam in bliss. It was too

wonderful. It was as if I had not lost my mother. Now the little shadow which had lain upon me disappeared. Now was my happiness complete.

"Ave Maria Santissima!" called the *sereno*. He was just outside the window. *"Ave Maria Santissima!* The new day has begun. It is serene.

THE END